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Issue 1117
November 11, 2010
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CONAN UNBOUND

**HE'S OVER HIS ANGER & TAKING
HIS LAST SHOT AT LATE NIGHT**

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"WE NEED A MIRACLE"

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Bruce Dale *for* National Geographic

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New technologies change many things. But not everything. You may surf, search, shop and blog online, but you still read magazines. And you're far from alone.

Readership has actually increased over the past five years. Even the 18-to-34 segment continues to grow. And typical young adults now read more issues per month than their parents. Rather than being displaced by "instant" media, it would seem that magazines are the ideal complement.

The explanation, while sometimes drowned out by the Internet drumbeat, is fairly obvious. Magazines do what the Internet doesn't. Neither obsessed with immediacy nor trapped by the daily news cycle, magazines promote deeper connections. They create relationships. They engage us in ways distinct from digital media.

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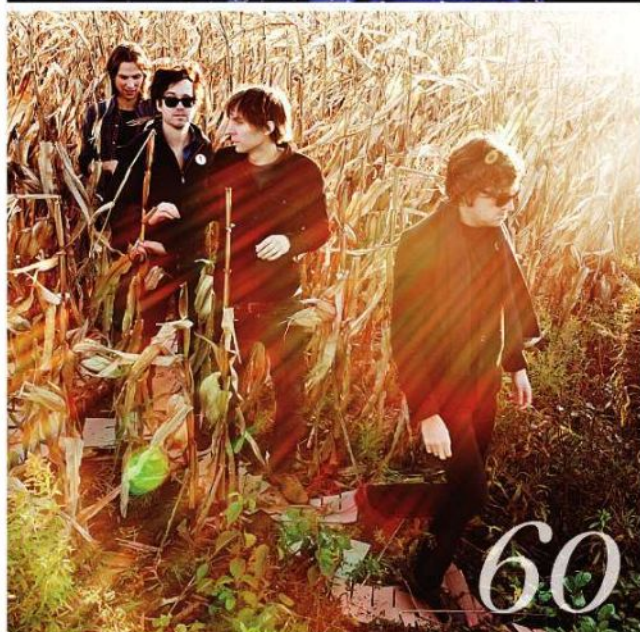
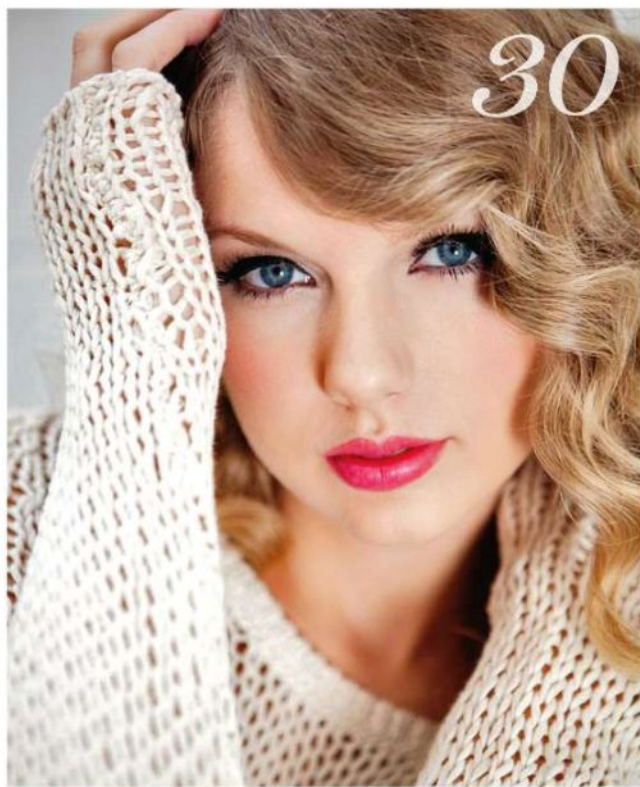
"ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS"

Conan the Adventurer

Safety comes first at Conan O'Brien cover shoots: "The pilots explained to Conan and the crew how not to get our heads sliced off by the chopper blades," says photographer Robert Trachtenberg. (One tip: "Stand back.") The idea was for O'Brien to be an action hero, because "he's 'dropping back' into everyone's home," says Trachtenberg. Also, O'Brien just "wanted a gun. I have no idea why."

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ON THE COVER Conan O'Brien photographed in Hawthorne, California, on September 29th, 2010, by **Robert Trachtenberg**.

Styling by Bruce H. Brumage. Prop styling by John Geary at Celestine Agency. Hair by Jeffrey Swander. Makeup by Deborah T. Paulmann. Suit by Tom Ford, shirt by Antoinette Distinctive Shirtmakers, tie by Ermenegildo Zegna, belt and shoes by Allen Edmonds.

FROM TOP: JOSEPH ANTHONY BAKER; SHAHAR AZRAN/POLARIS IMAGES; PETER YANG

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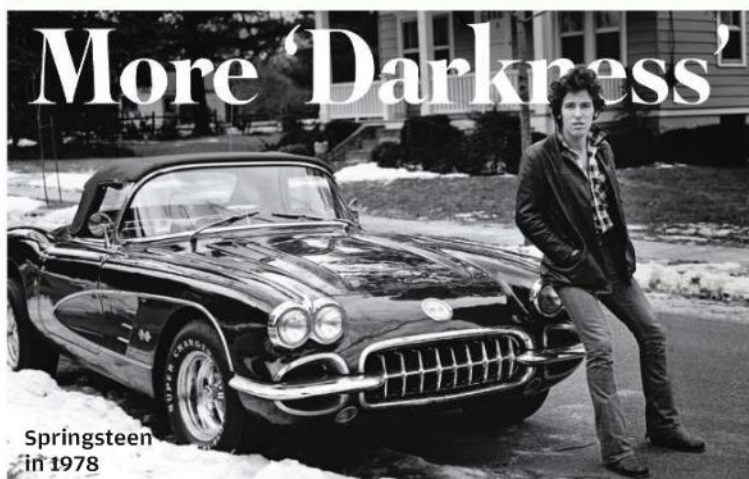
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Springsteen in 1978

Hear music from Bruce Springsteen's forthcoming *Darkness on the Edge of Town* box set before it's released on November 16th. Plus: See exclusive photos from the *Darkness* cover-shoot sessions done in 1978.

Conan Rocks With White

Exclusive: Stream two songs from Conan O'Brien's covers album, which features Jack White and was recorded in Nashville before a small audience. Plus: Watch a video interview filmed with O'Brien during his ROLLING STONE cover session.



O'Brien and White

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Cartoonist Garry Trudeau talks about his all-time favorite *Doonesbury* strips.

EXCLUSIVE MUSIC

Ray LaMontagne covers Bob Dylan's "The Man in Me."

ROLLING STONE LIVE

The Band Perry perform an acoustic set in our offices.

GALLERIES

Intimate portraits of Bob Marley; Rihanna on tour.

REVIEWS

Online-exclusive write-ups of the latest albums and singles.

BLOGS

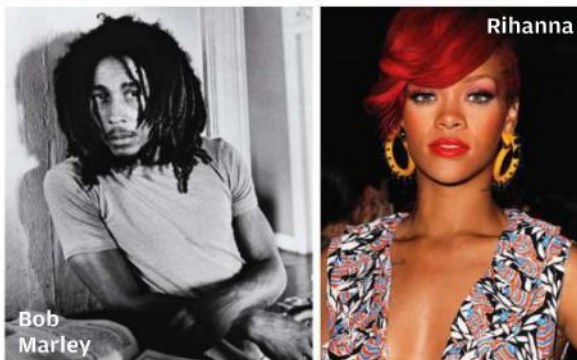
Matt Taibbi on politics, David Fricke on music and Rob Sheffield on pop culture.

GIVEAWAY

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The Beatles



Bob Marley

Rihanna

Rolling Stone's Beatles Fly Away Sweepstakes: No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. Open to residents of the 50 United States and Washington, D.C., who are 18 years of age or older as of November 3, 2010. To enter, log onto www.rollingstone.com/beatlesflyaway and follow the entering directions provided therein. Sweepstakes begins at 9:00am EST on November 3, 2010 and ends at 11:59pm EST on November 23, 2010. Number of winners: 1. ARV: \$4,000.00. Certain restrictions may apply. Complete Official Rules are available at www.rollingstone.com/beatlesflyaway.

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Fighting Words

FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS, we have listened to liberals complain about how Obama isn't doing enough and conservatives bitch about everything in sight. Finally, I can shove Jann S. Wenner's interview ["Obama in Command," RS 1115] in everyone's face and say, "Read this." Thanks, RS. It's no longer "Yes we can," but "Yes we did" and "Yes we will."

Martin A. Hogan, Hercules, CA

THANK YOU FOR REMINDING me why I voted for Obama. And sorry, folks, but change takes time.

Rob Schnapp, Livingston, NJ

GREAT INTERVIEW BY JANN Wenner and a welcome comfort to hear the reasoned comments by the president. His

accomplishments have been overshadowed by nonsense in the media – and his closing remarks really made me believe in him again.

Susan Savia, Wilmington, NC

OBAMA HAD IT BACKWARD when he said progressives have no business standing on the sidelines in the current political climate. It's Obama who is on the sidelines time and again: on the illegality and immorality of both wars, the bank bailouts and the Gulf oil spill.

Harold Burbank, Canton, CT

THANKS FOR GETTING THE word out that despite all the lies and bullshit, Obama is the most honest, intelligent and hardworking president you've had since FDR – and yet cool enough to enjoy the fact that Dylan didn't suck up to him.

John Lazarus, Kingston, Ontario

Tea Time

MATT TAIBBI AT A TEA PARTY rally ["Tea & Crackers," RS 1115] is reminiscent of Hunter S. Thompson at the Conference on Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. Glad to see RS hasn't changed. Sadly, neither have old, white conservatives.

Frances O'Donnell, Princeton, NJ

TAIBBI'S PIECE ON THE current state of the Tea Party

movement is one of the most educational and comprehensive I've read. "Medicare-motor-scooter conservatives" is now a part of my vocabulary.

Ricky L. Norvell, via the Internet

TAIBBI'S SPOT-ON ANALYSIS had me laughing out loud. What's sobering, however, is the realization that the Democrats' abject failure in spotlighting the Tea Party's hypocrisy and allowing the GOP to shape the political dialogue may have us all waking up on

Taibbi responds: So a movement that purports to be driven by anger against both parties revolts by . . . voting for the Republican Party. The same Republican Party that just a few years ago was greenlighting trillion-dollar bailouts and presiding over a record expansion of the federal government. When they screw you again, what's your next act of rebellion – voting in another batch of Republicans?

American Idiots

ROBERT TRACHTENBERG'S *Jackass* supermodel tribute ["Hot Sequel," RS 1115] is the best photo you've published all year. Thanks for sending me back to the original to check if Knoxville is as alluring as Cindy. The answer? Yes.

Rob Gallagher, New York

"Matt Taibbi at a Tea Party rally is reminiscent of Hunter S. Thompson at the Conference on Narcotics."

November 3rd to a country where the lunatics have taken over the asylum.

L. Montaigne, Coral Springs, FL

WHAT TAIBBI AND THE EAST and West Coast elites don't get is that the Tea Party is only a representation of the extreme frustration of the middle class with party-line politics from Democrats and Republicans. We're going to vote all of them out this November and keep voting them out if our demands for lower taxes and less government intrusion aren't met.

Aaron Ackeret, Stevens Point, WI

Ronnie's Return

FINALLY, AN ARTICLE ON Ron Wood that *doesn't* revolve around his drunken escapades or relationships with underage girls [Q&A, RS 1115]. After years of debauchery, it's so great to see that he's doing well – and even hinting at a Faces reunion tour. Let's hope he keeps it up.

Wendy Smyth, via the Internet

Miley's Gaffe

THANKS FOR PRINTING THE Miley Cyrus quote "California is not the most beautiful city in the entire world, I don't think" [RS 1115]. I laughed for 10 minutes. But when my kids didn't understand what made the quote funny, I cried for the next 10.

Andy Thorson, Sacramento

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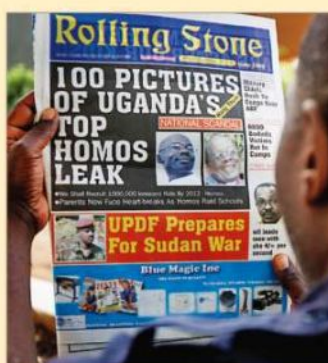
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NOT IN OUR NAME

The horrific actions of a newspaper in Uganda

A NEW NEWSPAPER OUT OF UGANDA BEARING THE NAME *Rolling Stone* has published one of the most vile and hateful anti-gay screeds we have ever read. The article printed the addresses and photos of 100 alleged homosexuals in the country, calling for them to be hanged. Not only are we not affiliated in any way with the Ugandan paper, we have demanded they cease using our name. But there is a larger issue at stake: Homosexuality is still a crime in much of Africa, often punishable by life in prison. "Half the world's countries that criminalize homosexual conduct do so because they cling to Victorian morality and colonial laws," says Scott Long, formerly of Human Rights Watch. "Getting rid of these unjust remnants of the British empire is long overdue." THE EDITORS



A close-up photograph of a hand with bright red manicured nails holding a large, clear ice cube. The hand is positioned over a blue SKYY Vodka bottle. A single drop of clear liquid is falling from the bottom of the ice cube into the bottle's opening. The bottle has the word "SKYY" in large white letters and "VODKA" in smaller white letters below it. The background is a solid, vibrant red.

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Rock & Roll



FREE WEEZY
Lil Wayne is scheduled to be released from Rikers on November 4th.

Lil Wayne Prepares His Post-Prison Comeback

The MC has a notebook full of rhymes for 'Tha Carter IV,' due out in 2011
By Evan Serpick

RAP'S BIGGEST STAR HAS one goal when he's released from prison on November 4th: finding a plane with a studio, so he can start cutting tracks on his way home to see his family. "We're gonna deal with that microphone,

no trip," says Bryan Williams, a.k.a. Birdman, co-founder of Wayne's label, Cash Money Records. "You can't keep him out of the studio."

During his eight-month stint in New York's Rikers Island on weapons charges, Lil Wayne has been putting rhymes down on paper at a furious pace – something the notorious freestyler hasn't done in years. "He hasn't written out rhymes

since [his early group] the Hot Boys," says Birdman. "There's a different swagger coming from Wayne, different things to talk about."

The jailhouse rhymes are intended for Wayne's next album, *Tha Carter IV* (planned for early 2011), the follow-up to the 2008 triple-platinum smash, *Tha Carter III*. His manager, Cortez Bryant, says Wayne's new rhymes [Cont. on 18]

Who Still Buys CDs? Country Fans

From Taylor Swift to Zac Brown, how the genre boomed in 2010
By David Browne

WHILE THE REST of the music business continues to crumble, one genre seems immune: country music. Four of the Top 10 albums in mid-October – Zac Brown Band, Darius Rucker, Kenny Chesney and Toby Keith – are by Nashville acts, and Taylor Swift's *Speak Now* is poised to be the year's biggest record.

"Country" now encompasses a broader range of styles than ever: pop-cross-over acts like Lady Antebellum and Sugarland, modern honky-tonkers like Brad Paisley, stubborn traditionalists like Jamey Johnson and country-rock favorites like Zac Brown Band. The second-biggest-selling album of the year, after Eminem's *Recovery*, is Lady Antebellum's *Need You Now*, which has sold nearly 3 million copies. "Country went through a period when everybody had a cowboy hat and even people in Nashville couldn't tell one from another," says Ken Levitan, who manages Johnson and Kings of Leon. "Now there's more individuality. Everybody doesn't sound the same."

In the weeks leading up to its release, Swift's album was Number One on Amazon on presales alone, four of its songs were on iTunes' list of best- [Cont. on 20]

Inside Jay-Z's Memoir, 'Decoded'

Book tells stories behind the hits, the rapper's philosophy of hip-hop

JAY-Z'S NEW BOOK, "Decoded," is not what you think it is. "There are people who wanted a Jay-Z tell-all book," says the rapper's business manager, John Meneilly. "But for Jay, that's not interesting." Instead, the 336-page book (out November 16th), is a detailed discussion of the meanings and inspirations behind 36 of his songs, interspersed with auto-



biographical vignettes and Jay's creative philosophy. "He felt that hip-hop is underappreciated as a poetic art," says *Decoded's* editor, Christopher Jackson. "It's about the merger between life and art."

As expected for a hip-hop superstar, Jay's book is being marketed like a Hollywood blockbuster. The MC teamed up with Microsoft's Bing and ad agency Droga5 for a massive \$1 million multimedia scavenger hunt



RUN THIS BOOK CLUB Jay-Z is launching his memoir, out November 16th, with a \$1 million Internet marketing campaign.

that has fans searching for reproductions of the book's pages all over the world. "The vision was: biggest book launch of all time," says Droga5 CEO Andrew Essex. Clues posted online will lead players to pages in New York, L.A., New Orleans, Miami and London; some are traditional billboards, others are tougher to find—inside jackets in a boutique, at the bottom of a swimming pool, on the felt of a pool table. (Players will be

eligible to win a trip to see Jay-Z and Coldplay on New Year's Eve in Las Vegas.)

Jay was deeply involved in every element of *Decoded*. "We probably went over the whole thing word by word a dozen times," says Jackson, noting that the MC chose the Andy Warhol print that's on the cover. "He's as committed to getting his book right as any novelist or historian I've ever worked with." **REED FISCHER**

LIL WAYNE

[Cont. from 17] will focus on his time in prison and reflect some larger truths about his life and success. "He's had time to take everything in from the years leading up to his going in," says Bryant. "We've been at such a fast pace, moving, moving, moving, that he's finally been able to put some things in perspective."

It's not as if Wayne has been missing from the charts. In August, he released "Right Above It," featuring Drake—the song debuted at Number Six on the Hot 100. A month later, he released *I Am Not a Human Being*, an album of material recorded before prison, which hit Number One. And Weezy's collaboration with Eminem, "No Love," has been a radio staple.

Drake, who is signed to Wayne's Young Money Entertainment label and appears on about half of *I Am Not a Human Being*, says Weezy

is desperate to keep up with the music world. "He wants to know about everything that's been going on," says Drake, who has visited Wayne three times during his sentence. In jail, Wayne's daily routine includes long sets of push-ups, greeting visitors including

"He's finally been able to put things in perspective," says Wayne's manager.

Kanye West and Nicki Minaj, and reading fan mail. The MC has maintained a presence with fans through Weezy thanxyou.com, where he posts letters to fans and adds short responses to some of the hundreds of letters he's received. "He actually goes through all the letters himself," says Lil Twist, a rapper on Young Money Entertainment who maintains Weezy's website and Twitter accounts.

But more than anything, Wayne spends his time in prison prepping for his return. "He writes, he listens to the radio every day—they get the radio and the local stations out there, so he's still listening to as much music as he can," says Bryant.

In May, Wayne was caught with an MP3 player and headphones—they are not allowed. As a result, the MC is serving his last month of detention in solitary confinement.

Wayne plans to spend a few days with his family after his release, probably including a big party in Miami, where the MC might perform. After that, there is talk of a show, possibly in Las Vegas, but plans haven't been finalized. "He's gonna come home and make everything better," says Birdman. "He's our super superstar, he's our Michael Jackson. We did great while he was gone, and I know we're going to do even better when he comes home." **TS**

IN THE NEWS

U2 team up with Danger Mouse for new LP

Bono has revealed that **Gnarls Barkley's** Danger Mouse is producing U2's next album, which will come out in the first half of 2011. "We have about 12 songs with him," Bono said. "It's just happening so easily." The band is also working on two other records, including a dance LP that will feature collaborations with **Will.i.am.**, **RedOne** and **David Guetta**. "U2's remixes in the 1990s were a real treasure," Bono said. "So we wanted to make a club-sounding record."



Bono

T.I. headed back to jail

The Atlanta MC was sentenced to 11 months in prison for violating the terms of his probation. The rapper, who was released from prison in December after serving seven months for weapons charges, was arrested for possession of Ecstasy and codeine cough syrup in September in L.A. Sources say that the jail term may push back the release of his *King Uncaged* LP to 2011. "He's disappointed," says the MC's attorney, Don Samuel, "but he's going to pull his head up and do his time."

RS Looks Back at Nineties in New Anthology

Break out your flannel, because **ROLLING STONE** and HarperCollins imprint Collins Design are publishing a collection of our greatest music stories and photography from the Nineties—the decade of grunge, gangsta rap and teen pop. From David Fricke's interview with Kurt Cobain months before the Nirvana leader's death to Steven Daly's visit to Britney Spears' bedroom, *The '90s* is packed with classic profiles, iconic photos, a guide to the decade's 100 greatest records, new essays by Slash, RZA, Perry Farrell, Matt Cameron and much more.



FROM LEFT: DALLE/GREGOIRE BERNARDI/LANDOV; JOHN SPELLMAN/RETNA



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COUNTRY MUSIC

[Cont. from 17] sellers, and three singles, "Speak Now," "Mine" and "Back to December," were in *Billboard's* Top 20. Industry sources estimate the album will move at least 750,000 copies its first week – more than Eminem's *Recovery*, which holds the first-week-sales record so far in 2010. "The demand is absolutely there," says Scott Borchetta, president of Swift's label, Big Machine. "It'll be hard to miss us."

Country is also making headway with rock fans. Kid Rock's upcoming *Born Free* includes appearances by Brown and Martina McBride; this summer, Brown opened seven Dave Matthews Band shows. "We're definitely Southern compared to Dave," says Brown, "but we play to his fans to try to gain the people that love music. We want to gather music lovers, not just country-music lovers." Next summer, Brown will make the move to stadiums for select dates.

According to Edison Research, twice as many fans in their 20s and 30s now listen to country as they did a decade ago (compared to hip-hop and alt-rock, which have declined in those age groups). "There are a lot of Eighties elements in country now, but without the synthesizers," says Capitol Nashville president Mike Dungan. "From a pragmatic standpoint, country is whatever country radio will play. The newer acts have younger fans than average, and it's by design. Our business is never better, in terms of dollars and cents, than when we're diverse."

Case in point: Darius Rucker of Hootie and the Blowfish. After he overcame skeptics at country radio, Rucker saw his first country album, *Learn to Live*, sell 1.5 million copies; his second, *Charleston, SC 1966*, debuted on the pop chart at Number Two. "A lot of people who listened to Hootie records in 1995 listen to country radio today," says Rucker. "That's where you get to hear guitar solos and that kind of songwriting."



New Country

A network of 3,000 radio stations keeps country fans buying CDs by top acts like the jammy Zac Brown (1), pop superstar Taylor Swift (2) and mellow-hat act Kenny Chesney (3).



In many ways, Nashville is the last bastion of the old-school music business. Fans overwhelmingly get their music on CD: Eighty percent of them still buy that format (and only 26 percent download). Radio remains the principal outlet for breaking new acts, thanks to 3,000 country stations nation-

"We want to gather music lovers," says Zac Brown, "not just country lovers."

wide, compared to 802 Top 40 and 350 "active rock" stations. "Some pundits might say we're living in the dark ages, and in some sense we might be," says Luke Lewis, CEO of Universal Nashville. "Our artists are out touring their asses off, and they're having hits on the radio. We're Southern and slow

to change, but maybe it's paying off for our business."

Country benefits from exceptionally loyal fans – and a concert biz that knows how to cultivate that bond. On his 2009 tour, which grossed \$71 million, Chesney charged as little as \$30 per ticket. Other major tours rarely charge more than \$70 to \$100 a seat. "Take a \$250 ticket to Lady Gaga," says Clint Higham, Chesney's manager. "No one in country is going to charge that much."

This is all a dramatic change from just a few years ago, when Zac Brown Band first went looking for a major-label deal. "They said, 'He's got a beanie and a beard, and his record was made in Georgia,'" recalls Brown's co-manager Bernie Cahill. "The whole package scared them off. Nashville is more open to different sounds now."

IN THE NEWS

Prince preps New York residency

At a press conference at New York's Apollo Theater in mid-October, Prince announced "Welcome 2 America," a series



of shows where he'll be joined by guests including Janelle Monáe, Maceo Parker

and Cassandra Wilson. Date and location details are TBD, but a Live Nation rep said it would be a multnight stand in the New York area. Prince hasn't played an extensive U.S. tour since 2004, though he launched a brief residency in Las Vegas in 2006 and headlined Coachella in 2008. "I've got a lot of hits," Prince said. "Bring your friends, bring your children and bring your foot spray, because it's gonna be funky."

The Cars reuniting for new album, tour

The Boston New Wave legends have reunited and are working on their first new album in 23 years. (Two original members toured



without leader Ric Ocasek as the New Cars in 2005.) The band posted a snippet of a new song

called "Blue Tip" on its Facebook page in mid-October. The album has no release date yet; the group is considering a tour for 2011.

Red Hot Chili Peppers album due next spring

RHCP drummer Chad Smith said the group is halfway done with its follow-up to 2006's *Stadium Arcadium* and hopes to have it out by March. The disc will be the Peppers' first release since guitarist John Frusciante left in 2008. He was replaced by Los Angeles session musician Josh Klinghoffer.

Ari Up, female punk pioneer, dies at 48

The singer for pioneering British punk band the Slits died on October 20th in Los Angeles. A representative said she died of a "serious illness." Up was only 17 when the Slits released their 1979 punk-reggae debut, *Cut*; the band toured with the Clash, who served as mentors.



"I was reluctant to talk to my doctor
about my unresolved depression symptoms.
I'm glad I finally did."



Actor portrayal.

Free 2-week
trial offer for
ABILIFY[†]

Visit www.ABILIFYmeplus.com

[†]Restrictions apply.

Many people being treated for depression still have depression symptoms.

If you've been taking an antidepressant for at least
6 weeks and still have some depression symptoms,
one option your doctor may consider is adding ABILIFY.

ABILIFY is a prescription medicine used to treat depression
in adults as add-on treatment to an antidepressant when
an antidepressant alone is not enough.



Some people have had symptom improvement as early
as 1 to 2 weeks after adding ABILIFY.[†]

Important Risk Information about ABILIFY

- Antidepressants can increase suicidal thoughts and behaviors in children, teens, and young adults. Serious mental illnesses are themselves associated with an increase in the risk of suicide. When taking ABILIFY, call your doctor right away if you have new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior, or thoughts of suicide. Patients and their caregivers should be especially observant within the first few months of treatment or after a change in dose. Approved only for adults 18 and over with depression
- Elderly dementia patients taking ABILIFY have an increased risk of death or stroke. ABILIFY is not approved for these patients

^{*} Lexapro[®] (escitalopram oxalate), Zoloft[®] (sertraline HCl), Prozac[®] (fluoxetine hydrochloride), Effexor XR[®] (venlafaxine HCl), and Paxil CR[®] (paroxetine HCl) are trademarks of their respective companies.

[†] Based on 6-week clinical studies comparing ABILIFY + antidepressant versus antidepressant alone.

- Call your doctor if you have high fever, stiff muscles, confusion, and increased heart rate or blood pressure—these may be signs of a rare but life-threatening condition called **neuroleptic malignant syndrome**
- Call your doctor if you develop abnormal or uncontrollable facial movements, as these could be signs of **tardive dyskinesia**, which may become permanent
- If you have **diabetes**, or have risk factors or symptoms of diabetes, your blood sugar should be monitored regularly. High blood sugar has been reported with ABILIFY and medicines like it. In some cases, extreme high blood sugar can lead to coma or death
- **Other risks** may include dizziness upon standing, decreases in white blood cells, which can be serious, seizures, impairment in judgment or motor skills, and trouble swallowing. Until you know how ABILIFY affects you, you should not drive or operate machinery

The **common side effects** in adults in clinical trials ($\geq 10\%$) include nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety, and insomnia. Tell your doctor about all the medicines you're taking, since there are some risks for drug interactions. You should avoid alcohol while taking ABILIFY.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please read the additional Important Information
about ABILIFY on the adjacent page.

Take the next step—ask
your doctor about ABILIFY.


ABILIFY[®]
(aripiprazole)
2 mg, 5 mg Tablet

If you or someone you know needs help paying for medicine, call
1-888-4PPA-NOW (1-888-477-2669). Or go to www.pparc.org



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ABILIFY

This summary of the Package Insert contains risk and safety information for patients about ABILIFY. This summary does not include all information about ABILIFY and is not meant to take the place of discussions with your healthcare professional about your treatment. Please read this important information carefully before you start taking ABILIFY and discuss any questions about ABILIFY with your healthcare professional.

Name

ABILIFY® (a-BIL-i-fi) (aripiprazole) (air-ri-PIP-ra-zall)

What is ABILIFY (aripiprazole)?

ABILIFY is a prescription medicine used as an add-on treatment to an antidepressant for adults with Major Depressive Disorder who had an inadequate response to antidepressant therapy.

What is depression?

Depression is a common but serious medical condition. Symptoms may include sadness, loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, loss of energy, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt, insomnia or excessive sleep, a change in appetite causing weight loss or gain, or thoughts of death or suicide. These could be depression symptoms if they interfere with daily life at home, at work, or with friends and last most of the day, nearly every day for at least 2 weeks.

What is the most important information that I should know about antidepressant medicines, depression, and other serious mental illnesses?

- Antidepressant medicines may increase suicidal thoughts or actions in some children, teenagers, and young adults
- Depression and serious mental illnesses are the most important causes of suicidal thoughts and actions

For more information, see the Prescribing Information and the Medication Guide called *Antidepressant Medicines, Depression and Other Serious Mental Illnesses, and Suicidal Thoughts or Actions*.

Who should NOT take ABILIFY?

People who are allergic to ABILIFY or to any substance that is in it. Allergic reactions have ranged from rash, hives and itching to difficulty breathing and swelling of the face, lips, or tongue. Please talk with your healthcare professional.

What is the most important information that I should know about ABILIFY?

Elderly patients, diagnosed with psychosis as a result of dementia (for example, an inability to perform daily activities as a result of increased memory loss), and who are treated with antipsychotic medicines including ABILIFY, are at an increased risk of death when compared to patients who are treated with a placebo (sugar pill). ABILIFY is not approved for the treatment of patients with dementia-related psychosis.

Antidepressants may increase suicidal thoughts or behaviors in some children, teenagers, and young adults, especially within the first few months of treatment or when the dose is changed. Depression and other serious mental illnesses are themselves associated with an increase in the risk of suicide. Patients on antidepressants and their families or caregivers should watch for new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior, or thoughts of suicide. Such symptoms should be reported to the patient's healthcare professional right away, especially if they are severe or occur suddenly. ABILIFY is not approved for use in pediatric patients with depression.

Serious side effects can occur with any antipsychotic medicine, including ABILIFY. Tell your healthcare professional right away if you have any conditions or side effects, including the following:

Stroke or ministroke in elderly patients with dementia: An increased risk of stroke and

ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia (for example, increased memory loss and inability to perform daily activities). ABILIFY (aripiprazole) is not approved for treating patients with dementia.

Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS): Very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating, or increased heart rate and blood pressure may be signs of NMS, a rare but serious side effect that could be fatal.

Tardive dyskinesia (TD): Abnormal or uncontrollable movements of face, tongue, or other parts of body may be signs of a serious condition known as TD, which may be permanent.

High blood sugar and diabetes: Patients with diabetes and those having risk factors for diabetes (for example, obesity, family history of diabetes), as well as those with symptoms such as unexpected increases in thirst, urination, or hunger should have their blood sugar levels checked before and during treatment. Increases in blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia), in some cases serious and associated with coma or death, have been reported in patients taking ABILIFY, and medicines like it.

Orthostatic hypotension: Lightheadedness or faintness caused by a sudden change in heart rate and blood pressure when rising too quickly from a sitting or lying position (orthostatic hypotension) has been reported with ABILIFY.

Leukopenia, Neutropenia, and Agranulocytosis: Decreases in white blood cells (infection fighting cells) have been reported in some patients taking antipsychotic agents, including ABILIFY. Patients with a history of a significant decrease in white blood cell (WBC) count or who have experienced a low WBC due to drug therapy should have their blood tested and monitored during the first few months of therapy.

Suicidal thoughts: If you have suicidal thoughts, you should tell your healthcare professional right away.

Dysphagia: Medicines like ABILIFY have been associated with swallowing problems (dysphagia). If you had or have swallowing problems, you should tell your healthcare professional.

What should I talk to my healthcare provider about?

Patients and their families or caregivers should watch for new or worsening depression symptoms, unusual changes in behavior and thoughts of suicide, as well as for anxiety, agitation, panic attacks, difficulty sleeping, irritability, hostility, aggressiveness, impulsivity, restlessness, or extreme hyperactivity. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have thoughts of suicide or if any of these symptoms are severe or occur suddenly. Be especially observant within the first few months of antidepressant treatment or whenever there is a change in dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about any medical conditions you may have and all medicines that you are taking or plan to take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, or herbal products.

Be sure to tell your healthcare provider:

- If you have suicidal thoughts
- If you have or have had a low white blood cell count (WBC)
- If you or anyone in your family have or had seizures
- If you or anyone in your family have or had high blood sugar or diabetes
- If you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding

What should I avoid when taking ABILIFY?

- Avoid overheating and dehydration
- Avoid driving or operating hazardous machinery until you know how ABILIFY affects you
- Avoid drinking alcohol
- Avoid breast-feeding an infant

What are the possible side effects of ABILIFY (aripiprazole)?

Common side effects in adults include: nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety and insomnia. It is important to contact your healthcare professional if you experience prolonged, abnormal muscle spasm or contraction which may be signs of a condition called dystonia.

This is not a complete list of side effects. For full patient information, visit www.abilify.com. Talk to your healthcare professional if you have questions or develop any side effects.

What percentage of people stopped taking ABILIFY due to side effects?

In clinical trials, the percentage of adults who discontinued taking ABILIFY due to side effects was 6% and 2% for patients treated with sugar pill.

Can I safely take ABILIFY while I'm taking other medications?

ABILIFY can be taken with most drugs; however, taking ABILIFY with some medicines may require your healthcare professional to adjust the dosage of ABILIFY.

Some medicines* include:

- ketoconazole (NIZORAL®)
- quinidine (QUINIDEX®)
- fluoxetine (PROZAC®)
- paroxetine (PAXIL®)
- carbamazepine (TEGRETOL®)

It is important to tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you're taking, just to be sure.

How should I take ABILIFY?

- Take ABILIFY exactly as directed by your healthcare professional
- ABILIFY is usually taken once a day and can be taken with or without food
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take only your regularly scheduled dose
- Talk to your healthcare provider before stopping ABILIFY or changing your dose

General advice about ABILIFY:

- ABILIFY should be kept out of the reach of children and pets
- Store ABILIFY Tablets and the Oral Solution at room temperature
- For patients who must limit their sugar intake, be aware that ABILIFY Oral Solution contains sugar
- For patients who cannot metabolize phenylalanine (those with phenylketonuria or PKU), ABILIFY DISCMLT® contains phenylalanine
- If you have additional questions, talk to your healthcare professional

Find out more about ABILIFY:

Additional information can be found at www.abilify.com

* NIZORAL is a registered trademark of Janssen Pharmaceutica; QUINIDEX is a registered trademark of Wyeth Pharmaceuticals; PROZAC is a registered trademark of Eli Lilly and Company; PAXIL is a registered trademark of GlaxoSmithKline; TEGRETOL is a registered trademark of Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

Based on Full Prescribing Information as of 11/09 1239550A7.

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The Future of Digital Music Is Now

Throw away your CDs: New streaming services offer infinite tunes to go

WITH A BIG ASSIST from the smartphone, Apple and Google, a long-sought digital-music promised land is finally just a click or two away: your favorite songs streamed down from the Internet “cloud,” available whenever you want to hear them, without any hassle, on any device you happen to own.

A number of smaller players have already marked their territory – even though there’s no proof that there’s money to be made. (Subscription services still make up a tiny percentage of the digital-music market.) In July, Berkeley-based MOG launched “All Access” smartphone apps that give listeners the keys to a catalog of more than 9 million songs. In August, the Scandinavian founders of Skype opened the doors to Rdio, another subscription service integrated with social-networking tools like Facebook and Twitter. Rhapsody, the granddaddy of subscription services, debuted its own all-you-can-eat mobile app in late 2009. All the services (which also include Thumbplay and, in Europe, Spotify) have roughly similar characteristics: a \$10-a-month fee for unlimited mobile access, the ability to cache songs on your phone for offline enjoyment, and social-networking functions designed to enhance music discovery. “People are looking at the rapid adoption of the smartphone,” says Jack Isquith, senior VP of digital music at Warner. “I think that has tilted more energy toward the idea of looking at the streaming model again.”

The pieces are falling into place. A quarter of U.S. cell-phone users own a smartphone; iPhone owners have already demonstrated a willingness to pay for apps; phones are considered hacker-resistant, which eases record-label paranoia about unauthorized file-sharing. “Hacking into a mobile phone to get those files

out is such a fringe thing,” says MOG CEO David Hyman. “The labels have evolved enough that we’re past the point where they care about that.”

Gartner Inc. analyst Mike McGuire says the labels are finally beginning to get behind the model. In a bid to spur the acquisition of subscribers, says McGuire, “the labels have relaxed their requirements for the upfront minimum guarantees they charge to get ac-

Warner CEO Edgar Bronfman Jr., he said, “Free streaming services are clearly not net positive for the industry, and as far as Warner Music is concerned will not be licensed.”

But while the free advertising-supported model founders and the all-you-can-eat startups scrounge for a critical mass of subscribers, most attention in the music world is riveted on the biggest players: Apple and Google. Throughout 2010, both

splash, perhaps before the end of the year. In late May, the company previewed a version of the Android Marketplace, in which songs bought in the Marketplace would be automatically streamed to a device running the Android interface. Buy it on your computer, play it on your phone. In July, Google hired Elizabeth Moody, a music-biz attorney with a long track record of arranging digital-music rights deals with the major

Head to Head: Best Mobile Music Apps

Which portable subscription service is right for your smartphone?

MOG

**\$9.99/month
unlimited access**

WORKS WITH iPhone, Android (and will play through Roku TV set-top boxes)

PROS Allows unlimited high-bit-rate (320 kps) downloads; excellent curation – including guest playlists from Thom Yorke and David Byrne.

CONS Search can be clunky.

RDIO

**\$9.99/month
unlimited access**

WORKS WITH iPhone, Android, BlackBerry

PROS Easy-to-use interface; social-networking tools let you connect with your friends on Facebook and Twitter.

CONS Just 7 million songs (the least of any service) means it lacks indie acts like Arcade Fire and Pavement.

RHAPSODY

**\$9.99/month
unlimited access**

WORKS WITH iPhone (Android and BlackBerry apps are on the way)

PROS Deep catalog of 10 million songs; Pandora-style personal radio stations.

CONS Overly complex interface is frustrating; low bit-rate downloads means tinny tunes.

THUMBPLAY

**\$9.99/month
unlimited access**

WORKS WITH iPhone, Android, BlackBerry

PROS Best choice for BlackBerry users – app started as BlackBerry native, and it allows you to import your iTunes playlists into non-Apple phones; slick interface.

CONS Weakest music-discovery tools; little editorial content.

cess to a catalog.” The goal, as yet unattained, is to find the sweet spot, the price point where enough people sign up for the services to generate significant revenue.

But U.S. fans holding out for Europe’s wildly popular service Spotify – which allows free ac-

“The smartphone has tilted more energy toward streaming,” says a Warner exec.

cess if you’re willing to listen to ads, and charges for an ad-free premium version that’s portable on smartphones – may have to wait a long time. Citing ongoing negotiations with labels, Spotify keeps delaying a U.S. release. In an earnings call by

companies have made a series of provocative moves.

In December, Apple bought the streaming service Lala. Apple’s lips are zipped, but industry observers assume that Lala’s technology will be wrapped into a service that lets users stream iTunes libraries through their iPhones. If Apple starts streaming iTunes, “it could make it very tough” for smaller players like MOG, says McGuire. While the startups struggle to build significant user bases, Apple already has 160 million credit-card numbers on file. (The company has also built a 500,000-square-foot data center in North Carolina, which tech watchers suspect is intended for cloud efforts.) Apple could flip a switch and legitimize the entire streaming model.

While everyone is speculating about Apple, Google has made its intentions known – and is poised to make a major

labels. In September, rumors ripped through the tech press that Google had pitched labels on a Google music product that would include a cloud-based “storage locker.”

If Google made it as easy to get to all your music, wherever you are, as checking your Gmail or Facebook, the company might have the best chance of anyone of breaking what Peter Fader, a professor of marketing at the University of Pennsylvania, calls “Apple’s stranglehold on the industry.”

“Cloud functionality is potentially really attractive,” adds Warner’s Isquith. “When it comes to Google, who are clearly a great company, it remains to be seen how they are going to create the total experience. Apple created a friction-free pathway between iTunes and the hardware. They nailed the experience.” **ANDREW LEONARD**



ASK DR. OZZY

Ozzy Osbourne answers your questions

Q I know you exercise a lot and have changed your lifestyle dramatically, but is it more difficult to maintain your exercise schedule and health regimen when you are touring? What do you recommend for those who live on the road?

—John, Santa Barbara, California

A To be honest with you, John, I don't really need to go to the gym when I'm on the road: During a show, I'll burn about 2,000 calories and use muscles I don't even know I have – until the next day, when I feel like I've been thrown off the Empire State Building. But here's the advice I'd give to anyone who works away from home in a sedentary job: Go for a walk. It's one of the best forms of exercise there is, and it costs nothing. The only reason I don't go for walks myself is because my arse has got a mind of its own, and if I'm out of range of a toilet, I freak out. That shouldn't stop anybody else, though.

Q I saw a yellow, spongy froth come out of my 54-year-old boyfriend's penis during ejaculation. He says it's been three years since he had sex. Could it be "rusty pipes"?

—Anonymous, Mount Vernon, New York

A Listen: If I had yellow, spongy, frothy shit coming out of my dick, I wouldn't be writing to Dr. Ozzy – I'd be running to the fucking hospital! It's a cause for alarm, don't you think? It reminds me of when I was younger, and this school friend of mine started to piss sperm. You ain't never seen anything like it. We were all looking at him, our jaws on the floor, going, "Is that his life supply – gone?" I've no idea what happened to that kid, but I hope he got it checked out. But back to your question: You could always get your boyfriend to try a few five-knuckle shuffles, to see if the problem really is "rusty pipes," but, personally, I'd be making a date with my local dick doctor – and not wasting any time about it, either.

Q I suspect that my 15-year-old son is partaking in a bit of the "sweet leaf." Without alienating our good relationship, how can I deal with the dripping irony of it all?

—Anonymous, Jersey, Channel Islands

A Here's what I always tell myself: We were all kids once, and when we were worried about being caught doing anything bad, we'd lie. When my father gave me the "If I ever catch you smoking cigarettes" lecture, I still did it, but under wraps so he wouldn't find out. So don't be militant about the drugs. Just come clean with your kid, lay your cards on the table. Say, "Look, I know about the pot, and I'm worried." Tell them that, unlike the dickhead who's been selling them weed, you love them unconditionally, and you're the best friend they'll ever have. Not that I'm one to give any advice, mind you. The only time I ever talked to my kids about drugs, it was to ask, "Can you give me some?"

Q My girlfriend hasn't had sex with me for months – she's always too tired after coming home from work. What can I do to make her interested in a game of hide-the-sausage?

—Adam, Brooklyn

A Romance, Adam. You need a bit of romance. (And that includes not using phrases like "hide the sausage.") As I've always said to Sharon, there are 24 hours in a day, so it shouldn't be so hard to make sure you spend at least one of them with each other. Go on a date. Have dinner together. Or put on a wig and a false beard, check into a B&B and shag the shit out of each other, like you're having an affair. Maybe the fact that she isn't going to bed with you is a form of protest. Maybe she just wants more excitement in her life.

If you want Dr. Ozzy's advice about health, sex and family matters, go to rollingstone.com/drozy.

Huge Nirvana Exhibit Due in 2011

The first guitar Kurt Cobain smashed onstage, the singer's trademark yellow cardigan and the handwritten lyrics to early Nirvana tunes like "Floyd the Barber" are just a few of the 200 items that will be displayed in "Nirvana: Taking Punk to the Masses," an upcoming exhibit about the Nineties rockers that will open at Seattle's Experience Music Project in April. "It will show the epic mythmaking side of Nirvana and the intimate side of these guys, too," says curator Jacob McMurray, who drew from 2,000 Nirvana-related items in EMP's archives and from bassist Krist Novoselic's personal collection. "He pulled out about 20 bins of material," says McMurray. "He clearly hadn't looked at any of it in a decade or more."

PATRICK DOYLE



IN THE NEWS

R.E.M. announce new LP

The alternative-rock icons' 15th studio album will be called *Collapse Into Now* and is set to be released next



spring. The album was produced by **Jackknife Lee** – who also worked on R.E.M.'s

2008 LP, *Accelerate* – and was recorded in Nashville, New Orleans and Berlin. "This record, I want it to be broader," guitarist **Peter Buck** said earlier this year. "There are some really pretty acoustic things, some total noisy rock and some kind of poppy stuff."

Elton John, Lady Gaga duet for Disney film

The pair have recorded an original song together called "Hello, Hello" for the animated film *Gnomeo & Juliet*, due out in February. The movie is being produced by **Elton John** and his partner, **David Furnish**.

Springsteen set to play intimate Pittsburgh gigs

After taking most of this year off, **Bruce Springsteen** returns to the stage on November 4th and 5th for concerts with his friend and col-



laborator **Joe Grushecky**. The duo will be celebrating the 15-year anniversary of

Grushecky's album *American Babylon* at the 2,300-capacity Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall in Pittsburgh.

Pink Floyd's Mason hopes band will reunite

Pink Floyd drummer **Nick Mason** says he's open to the idea of a Pink Floyd reunion. "I think all of us would like the idea of repeating the Live 8 concept," he said. "I think it would be a very nice way for a band to gently move toward retirement, by doing shows absolutely for charity, rather than for more income."

Patti Smith memoir up for award

Smith's 2010 book, *Just Kids*,



about her friendship with the artist **Robert Mapplethorpe** and life in New York in

the Sixties and Seventies, has been nominated for a National Book Award in the nonfiction category.

BACK STAGE PASS

YOUR TICKET TO
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Introducing Head & Shoulders Hair Endurance!

Head & Shoulders Hair Endurance shampoo gives you thicker looking hair in one week vs unwashed hair. Troy Polamalu uses it, and his hair is so thick it has its own website.



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The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas

Opening December 15, this enchanting luxury resort will feature residential-styled living spaces with one-of-a-kind private terraces, an incomparable collection of restaurants helmed by renowned chefs, hand-picked shops from around the globe, an exquisite Spa & Hammam, 3 distinct pool settings, intriguing bars & lounges, a world-class nightclub and a 100,000 square foot casino.



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of LAS VEGAS

cosmopolitanlasvegas.com

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levelupgear.com



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Rivers Cuomo Looks Back at 'Pinkerton'

With reissue out soon, Weezer frontman recalls making of 'diseased' LP

WHEN RIVERS CUOMO began writing the songs that became Weezer's second album, *Pinkerton*, in late 1995, he didn't have to use much imagination to come

CLASSIC ALBUM

up with lyrics about crippling loneliness, falling in love with a lesbian or getting rebuffed by a coed who turned down his invitation to a Green Day gig. "Why would somebody make stuff up like that?" he says. "Ninety-nine percent of what I'm talking about on *Pinkerton* actually happened."

The raw, intensely personal album was a flop – it peaked at Number 19 and didn't produce any hits. Just five years later, Cuomo called the LP "sick, sick . . . I never want to hear those songs again." But over the years, *Pinkerton* became a cult favorite to a new generation of suburban punks, and on November 2nd, Weezer are rereleasing the album in a two-CD deluxe edition. (They are also playing the LP in its entirety on a tour that kicks off in November.) "I would still argue that *Pinkerton* is sick, and diseased," Cuomo says. "But that's what's so great about it."

The band's second album was originally going to be a



THE GOOD LIFE
Cuomo (left) and Bell
recording *Pinkerton*
in Los Angeles, 1996



Pinkerton

Released September 24th, 1996

Chart Peak Number 19

Copies Sold 867,419

Produced by Weezer

Key Tracks "El Scorcho," "Pink Triangle"

synth-driven rock opera called *Songs From the Black Hole*. But then-bassist Matt Sharp's side project the Rentals released their debut. "I felt like it had a lot of the same musical and lyrical themes," Cuomo says. "So I scrapped the whole idea and went to a more serious, dark place." At the same time,

Cuomo's life had taken a radical turn: After the huge success of the band's 1994 debut, Cuomo enrolled in Harvard at the age of 26. "I was craving mental stimulation," he says. "The previous 18 months I was wasting my life driving around in a van, playing the same 10 songs over and over."

The Ivy League experience wasn't what he hoped it would be, but it gave him plenty of material. "I was isolated at school – I couldn't even drive because of an incredibly painful surgery I had on my leg," he says. "I just retreated into a shell." Cuomo's interactions with other undergrads – plus an obsession with Puccini's opera *Madame Butterfly* (whose lead is named Pinkerton) – became the record's main inspirations. "The opera paralleled what was happening in my life," he says. "Maybe I could have been Puccini in a previous life."

The group, which also includes drummer Pat Wilson and guitarist Brian Bell, cut the album during breaks from school. "They did a ton of takes – I think we used about 14 records worth of tape," engineer Dave Fridmann recalls. "There were definitely difficult moments and tension." The LP came out in September, and the band supported it with a short tour marked by infighting and sloppy shows. Sharp left the band in 1998, and then the group was essentially MIA until 2000.

When Weezer started touring again in the early 2000s, they rarely played *Pinkerton* cuts, but Cuomo has a new appreciation for it. "I view it as a classic-rock record for this generation," he says. "My main reaction to hearing it now is that it sounds freaking amazing." **ANDY GREENE**

PERFORMANCE

My Morning Jacket Dig Deep Into Their Past



Terminal 5, New York, October 18th

My Morning Jacket opened this five-show stand – playing each of their studio albums in its entirety, one a night – by attacking their 1999 debut, *The Tennessee Fire*, like they were covering another band. Which they were. Singer-

guitarist Jim James and bassist Tom Blankenship are the only remaining members from the quartet on that record, a set of mostly spaced-country ballads with little hint of the distorted swagger lurking inside. "When we made this record, we'd never played live together," James said before performing "I Will Be There When You Die" the way he did it then, with acoustic guitar in deep reverb.

It was one of the few songs to escape loud dramatic overhaul. "Heartbreakin' Man," which opened the album with dreamy R.E.M.-like jangle, came out as heavy, furious psychedelia. James sang "They Ran" as R&B voodoo, like he'd rearranged it for 2008's *Evil Urges*. "War Begun" was the band's history

MMJ's
Jim
James



packed into one long ascending lesson: plaintive strumming and Seventies-soul inflections, blown up with electric-Neil Young guitar hysterics. At one point, James swung his instrument around like a broadsword.

There was nostalgia too. Guitarist Johnny Quaid, who left in 2004, came out for a few numbers. But this show was My Morning Jacket stepping back with eyes forward. Now that they have played the album live, maybe they should recut it – as the band they are now.

DAVID FRICKE



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HOT LIST

1 MARK RONSON AND BOY GEORGE "Somebody to Love Me"

We've had "Karma Chameleon" playing in a loop for the past 27 years, but there's finally a reason to turn it off: With its rich vocals, skittering beat and sparkling steel drum, this single isn't just a startling Boy George comeback - it's one of the year's best songs. Now be a dear and fetch our lipstick.



2 CEE LO GREEN "Old Fashioned"

This spine-tingling Enchantment Under the Sea-ready ballad is all plinking guitars and orchestral flourishes, evoking early Sam Cooke and Ray Charles. Hey, you know what Cee Lo would have been in the 1950s? Famous!

3 YELAWOLF FEAT. GUCCI MANE "I Just Wanna Party"

Alabama newcomer Yelawolf looks like Travis Barker, raps like Bun B. Perfect! With this doomy trunk-rattler about drunk white girls, the Four Loko-guzzling ladies of Delta Gamma finally have a Dirty South anthem of their own.



4 WILLOW SMITH "Whip My Hair" video

Don't trust anyone over 10: Will and Jada's nine-year-old kid reveals herself to be the hippest human alive in this paint-splattered THX 1138-meets-Degrassi video. Long live fetuswave!

5 LYKKE LI "Get Some" ▶

We're not quite sure why the Nordic indie queen sings "I'm your prostitute/You gon' get some" on this propulsive electro-tribal jam, but the beat is scary enough to make us afraid to ask.

IN THE NEWS

Al Pacino to Play Phil Spector in HBO Film

The actor has signed on to portray the Wall of Sound producer in a TV movie that will likely begin production next year. The movie, which will be directed by **David Mamet** and executive-produced by **Barry Levinson**, won't cover Spector's entire life and career - instead, it focuses on his recent murder trials and imprisonment. "He just saw a very interesting character to play," says a rep for Pacino.



Spector

Beastie Boys Plan 2011 Return

The hip-hop trio's eighth studio album, *Hot Sauce Committee Part 2*, will be released next spring. The group was slated to put out an album in 2009, but it was pushed back after **Adam "MCA" Yauch** underwent treatment for throat cancer last year.

Ke\$ha Returns With Nine-Song EP

The electro-pop singer is following up her double-platinum debut, January's *Animal*, with a nine-song EP, *Cannibal*, on November 22nd. "It's deeper, stronger, harder, faster, crazier," she says. **Dr. Luke** returned to produce, as Ke\$ha sings about ditching a wimpy dude on "Grow a Pear" and threatens to "pull a Jeffrey Dahmer" on the title track (co-written with her mother). Adds the singer, "I feel like the weirdos are what keep life interesting."



Ke\$ha

DMB Prep New Live Set

Due out November 9th, the two-disc *Live in New York City* captures the **Dave Matthews Band's** sold-out July 17th concert at Citi Field, and features songs ranging from classics ("Crash Into Me") to covers ("All Along the Watchtower") to rarities ("Seek Up"). The group will launch a fall tour November 2nd in Buffalo, New York.

INXS Rerecording Hits

The surviving members of the Australian band have recut some of their best-known songs with singers **John Mayer, Rob Thomas, Ben Harper, Tricky** and others for a 2011 release called *Original Sin*.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: LEFT: ALEXEI PANTSIKOV/TAR-TASS PHOTO/CORBIS; JAE C. HONG/GETTY IMAGES; DUFFY/REX USA; ARNOLD WITKIN/REX USA; PHIL SPECTOR/REX USA; NO CREDIT; LUIS SANTANA/31; PETERSBURG TIMES/ZEINA WILSON/STILL



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Taylor Swift

The country-pop star on her new Nashville pad, Japanese-cooking skills and confessional new album

By Austin Scaggs

TAYLOR SWIFT'S NEW RECORD COVERS an extremely busy period in her life – personally and professionally – so she had no shortage of material to cover. “First I wrote 30 songs, then 35, then 40, and I kept going, because it never felt right,” says Swift, 20. “I pushed myself ruthlessly and tried never to be satisfied with my writing.” The album, which some retailers think could sell a million copies its first week, touches on her high-profile relationships with Taylor Lautner (on “Back to December”) and Joe Jonas (on “The Story of Us”), as well as her surprise upstaging by Kanye West at the 2009 VMAs (“Innocent”). But responding to rumors that the two reconciled backstage at this year’s VMAs, Swift just sighs and says, “It’s a long story.”

How long after the VMA incident with Kanye did you write “Innocent”?

Some songs take 30 minutes to write, and some take six months, which was the case with “Innocent.” When things affect me intensely and really hit me hard, it can take a while to figure out what I think about it and what to say about it.

What happens when you need to write something immediately?

The people closest to me are used to me deserting a conversation and bolting into some corner of the room with my phone out, hunched over, singing some melody or lyric or hook into my phone. I wrote “The Story of Us” about running into an ex at an awards show, and I came home and sat down at a kitchen table and told my mom, “I felt like I was standing alone in a crowded room.” She tried to console me, but I was gone at that point.

Who is the song “Mean” about?

“Mean” is about a writer who kept going off on me, blasting me. There’s a place for constructive criticism, but then there’s a line that gets crossed. Every time I’d read something new, it would just level me, and my only way of handling it was to write a song about it.

Whose wedding did you imagine ruining in the song “Speak Now”?

A friend of mine who was hopelessly in love with a guy she grew up with. But one day she found out he was engaged to this horrible, controlling, mean girl who made him cut out his family and friends. So I said to her, “Are you going to speak now, rush the church and say, ‘Don’t do it,’” you know? Sure enough, that night I had a dream about one of my exes getting married, and I woke up and wrote the song. In the end, the guy got married, and she’s sad.

How are you adjusting to moving into your new Nashville condo?

I’m so happy. I live at the top of a building, but it feels like a house. This city feels like home. I cook a lot. This morning I woke

up at 5:15 a.m. with jet lag and made three different breakfasts, then I made cookies for meetings I have today, then a pitcher of iced tea.

Do you have a specialty?

I have a Japanese Teppanyaki grill in my kitchen. So I make fried rice and teriyaki and filet mignon and shrimp. My friends love that.

You recently posted a photo on your Twitter account of an Owl City album spinning on your record player. What’s in your vinyl collection?

I’ve gotten into vinyl because I love the event of going out to a record store like the Great Escape, which is down the street from me in Nashville, and buying a record, taking it home, putting it on the record player and listening to it. It makes music more of an activity. I’ve gotten used to Tom Petty records, like the first album, with “Rockin’ Around (With You)” and “Breakdown” and “Hometown Blues.” I have a bunch of stuff: Tracy Chapman, Ryan Adams’ *Easy Tiger* and *Demolition*, Band of Horses’ *Infinite Arms*, Emmylou Harris’ *Roses in the Snow*. . . . *Speak Now* is coming out on vinyl, which I’m really excited about.

What are you dreaming up for your live show next year?

After I finish writing a song, I picture it in concert. I imagine it as a music video and as a photo in the CD booklet. The visual element is my favorite way to tell those stories, and all that comes rushing in after I write a song. So since “Speak Now” is about interrupting a wedding, I’d really like to do that every night.

Is there a question you’ve never been asked?

Would you rather live on a houseboat or in a lighthouse? I’d rather live in a lighthouse, because you’re probably living on a peninsula, you can take walks. Hands down, lighthouse.

Is it harder now to be a role model for young kids, even as you reach 21 and grow up?

There are girls out there who are determining their thoughts and dreams and opinions about who they want to be. If I have a small part in that, I take it seriously. A lot of moms come up to me at the grocery store and say, “Thank you for being a role model for my daughter.” When I was nine or 10, Faith Hill was my favorite singer, and everything she said, wrote or did, every video she made, mattered to me. She helped determine who I wanted to be.

So you’re not going to have a wild night out when you turn 21 in December?

I don’t think I was born to be in the club. Just to throw that out there.



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Solomon Burke

1940-2010

The outsize life (he had 21 children) and incomparable influence (he inspired the Rolling Stones) of Solomon Burke, the King of Rock and Soul. By Alan Light

SOLOMON BURKE WAS IN A MOVIE THEATER WATCHING "THE BLUES BROTHERS" in 1980 when he was shocked to hear the title characters performing his biggest hit, "Everybody Needs Somebody to Love." He was even more shocked to see it attributed to his old friend Wilson Pickett. When he called Atlantic Records, the label he recorded "Everybody" for in 1964, to complain, Atlantic co-founder Jerry Wexler (who once said that Burke was "the best soul singer of all time") was delighted to find out his old friend was still alive.

For Burke, who later said he received a \$20,000 royalty check the following day, the movie was the first step in a long climb back out of obscurity. That journey culminated in the past decade, when he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2001; won a Grammy for his 2002 album *Don't Give Up on Me*; was invited to join his most celebrated disciples, the Rolling Stones, onstage; and made records with contributions from Bob Dylan, Tom Waits, Eric Clapton and Elvis Costello. "He was a wonderful singer who influenced the Rolling Stones throughout our career," says Mick Jagger, who brought Burke onstage for several shows in 2002 to tear through "Everybody Needs Somebody to Love," which the Stones covered in the mid-Sixties.

When Burke was pronounced dead at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport on October 10th at the age of 70 (the cause of death has yet to be made public), his passing also marked the loss of an irrepressible and beloved character – a raconteur, businessman and father of 21 children (and grandfather to 90) whose legacy outstrips even his unforgettable music. "Solomon had a very distinctive sound," says Aretha Franklin. "You would never mix him up with anyone else, and he was without a doubt one of the best."

Burke was one of the true architects of soul music. His hits from the early 1960s, including "Everybody Needs Some-



EVERYBODY NEEDS SOMEBODY TO LOVE
Burke onstage circa 1965. "Solomon could command a stage better than anybody," says Sam Moore.

body to Love," "Cry to Me" and "Got to Get You Off My Mind," were recorded and performed by Bruce Springsteen, Otis Redding, Led Zeppelin and Tom Petty. "Cry to Me" was featured in the film *Dirty Dancing*, and Burke had a role as a crime boss in the 1987 movie *The Big Easy*.

Burke delivered his first sermon at a church in his native Philadelphia at age seven; by nine, he was known as "The Wonder Boy Preacher." After early forays into gospel, he had his first R&B hit in 1961 with a version of Patsy Cline's "Just Out of Reach (Of My Two Open Arms)." In 1964, Burke was dubbed "The King of Rock and Soul" by a Baltimore DJ – after that, he often performed with a crown, cape and throne.

Burke's contemporaries speak in awe of his power onstage – he was a roof-raising house-rocker and a devastating ballad singer. "Solomon could command a stage better than anybody," says Sam Moore.

"We used to finish our set and go sit in the audience and watch him." Adds L.C. Cooke, Sam Cooke's brother, "On one tour with James Brown, Solomon started with 20 minutes, but he was kicking James Brown's butt so bad that he cut Solomon's time down to one song!"

As a child, Burke loved the cowboy music of Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, which helped inspire the sound of many of his early

hits – including “Down in the Valley” and “Just Out of Reach” – that bridged gospel and country. “He knew more about country music than most everybody making what they call country music now,” says Buddy Miller, who produced Burke’s 2006 album *Nashville*, which included duets with Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris and Patty Griffin.

Burke had a rich life outside of music: He was a bishop in the nondenominational House of God for All People near his home outside Los Angeles, he ran a fleet of limousines, and he was a licensed mortician. (“Solomon Burke knock you dead from the bandstand,” Joe Tex once said. “Then he gift-wrap you for the trip home.”) Wexler – who signed Burke to Atlantic – described him as “wily, highly intelligent, a salesman of epic proportions, sly, sure-footed, a never-say-die entrepreneur.”

His schemes were the stuff of legend – and not surprising for a man who weighed more than 300 pounds for much of his life, many of them revolved around food. “Solomon would bring his pots and pans on tour,” says Moore, “and while we were at rehearsal or soundcheck, he would be in his room cooking. After the show, he’d have the food done and leave the door open where you could get the aroma. Everybody’s hungry by that time of night, so you’d go get a plate, and naturally he would charge – you had to pay to eat.”

Bobby Womack was 16 when his group, the Valentinos, opened for Burke at the Apollo Theater in the early Sixties. “He would be walking through the aisles selling popcorn with his picture on the box,” says Womack. “I thought, ‘That guy is crazy – in a good way.’”



THE KING OF ROCK AND SOUL
In recent years, Burke’s career blossomed again: He won a Grammy in 2003 and collaborated with Dylan, Clapton and the Rolling Stones.

Above all, what everyone who encountered Burke remembers was his kindness and loyalty. (When I first interviewed him in 2002, my wife was pregnant with our son; Burke instantly claimed the boy as his godchild, and sent holiday cards and regularly asked after my family ever since.) “He was a joy to be around – everybody loved Solomon,” says Percy Sledge. “Even though we’re about the same age, I learned so much from him.”

Adds Jerry Lee Lewis, “Solomon became your best friend the first time you met him.” Burke sang on Lewis’ most recent album, and the two saw each other on September 28th, at an event honoring Lewis at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles. “If he was feeling bad, he never let anybody know it,” says Lewis.

Solomon Burke’s songs were inseparable from his life. “He made everyone feel so great and generated so much love in the room,” says Steve Jordan, who produced Burke’s 2008 album *Like a Fire*. “And that leads you to ‘Everybody Needs Somebody to Love’ – that was basically his theme, and he lived it.”

“I thought Solomon would outlive everybody,” adds Womack. “He saw more life than a hundred people would see.”

In an interview with *ROLLING STONE* two weeks before

his death, Burke reminisced about his favorite songs from the early years, laughing as he described Bobby Darin helping him make sandwiches to sell backstage (“He put a mean mayonnaise on that bread!”) and pausing to reflect on the artists – Ray Charles, Big Joe Turner – who inspired him. “It amazed me that these songs were all true,” he said. “They weren’t about fantasies, but things that really happened in the singers’ lives. And for all of these singers, their story gets greater and greater over time.”

SOLOMON BURKE’S GREATEST SONGS

Atlantic Records co-founder Jerry Wexler called Burke the greatest soul singer who ever lived. Here’s why:

“Just Out of Reach (Of My Two Open Arms)”

1961

Burke’s first chart hit was an R&B cover of a country tune, backed by a big band and choir. It anticipated the sound of Ray Charles’ 1962 blockbuster, *Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music*, and Burke even sneaks an Elvis quaver into his voice.

“Cry to Me”

1962

Before Burke was a pop singer, he sang gospel. This gently seductive cha-cha cracks open at the one-minute mark, when he unleashes a churchy howl. A Top Five R&B hit, it got a second life from its appearance in *Dirty Dancing*’s steamiest scene.

“If You Need Me”

1963

Co-written by Wilson Pickett, this slow-smoldering ballad features a spoken verse whose delivery couldn’t have come from anyone who hadn’t been a preacher. “Solomon wouldn’t record without his pulpit in the studio,” his friend Don Covay said.

“Everybody Needs Somebody to Love”

1964

The Rolling Stones repeatedly dipped into Burke’s songbook on their early records and used to open their shows with this uptempo stomp – and Burke himself sang it with them on their 2004 album *Live Licks*. It’s probably best known through the Blues Brothers’ 1980 cover.

“Got to Get You Off My Mind”

1965

Burke started writing his biggest hit at a rock-bottom moment: the December day that his wife told him she wanted a divorce and Sam Cooke was killed. Musically, it’s a tribute to Cooke’s easy swing and vocal mannerisms, but Burke’s voice is just barely holding back incredible pain.

“Maggie’s Farm”

1965

Burke was called the “King of Rock and Soul” and always had an ear for a great rock song. One of the earliest Bob Dylan covers by a black artist, this roaring, infectious cut appeared only a few months after Dylan debuted it on *Bringing It All Back Home*.

“You and Your Baby Blues”

1975

As his career dipped in the Seventies, Burke expanded his stylistic range, scoring movies and continuing to cover rock hits. His final Top 20 R&B entry was this lush, canny approximation of Barry White’s sound, which appeared on the album *Music to Make Love By*.

“Don’t Give Up on Me”

2002

This austere, pleading, 6/8-time torch song is the standout title track to Burke’s Joe Henry-produced comeback disc, which won Burke his first Grammy – for Best Contemporary Blues Album.

DOUGLAS WOLK

"Glee is a homogenization of everything, and ultimately will lead to emptiness." —Damon Albarn

Random Notes



Kanye Ballin'

Let's have a toast for the double-dribblers! Kanye West shows off his hoop skills in Sydney while in town to premiere his "Runaway" megavideo. Bonus: He managed to go the entire game without tweeting once.

CAREER SLIDE

Newly single Xtina and the ain't-no-other-man in her life, her son, Max, took on the jumbo slide at a West Hollywood pumpkin patch.



HELLO, GOODBYE

Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr whipped out their mobiles at a London book party. Macca to Ringo: "Stop sexting me!"



GILDED LILY

Former joint-puffer and hooch-guzzler Lily Allen showed off her impregnated profile at a London club. Did she need a plus-one?



Elton, Elvis, Gregg and the Dude

Elton's Honky Cats

T Bone Burnett's Speaking Clock Revue brought Elton John, Elvis Costello, Gregg Allman, John Mellencamp, Jim James and Jeff Bridges to New York for a benefit bash. It was only Allman's second show since his liver transplant. "I want to thank God," he said, "and the person who released their liver so I could live."



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SPLASH NEWS; RICHARD YOUNG/STARTRAKSPHOTO.COM; MICHAEL C./BROADIMAGE; TAYLOR HILL/WIREIMAGE; 2: MAVRIXONLINE.COM



THE AEROPLANE FLIES HIGH
Pumpkins stud Billy Corgan and his girlfriend, the Veronicas' Jessica Origliasso, traveled light in Australia.



CHANGE GAMES
Even with Jigga in the house, the Yanks couldn't win their third game against the Rangers. It's a hard-knock life!



HAPPY HOUR
Gaga totally fit in with the lager-loving punters with her slutty Joanna Lumley get-up at a London pub.

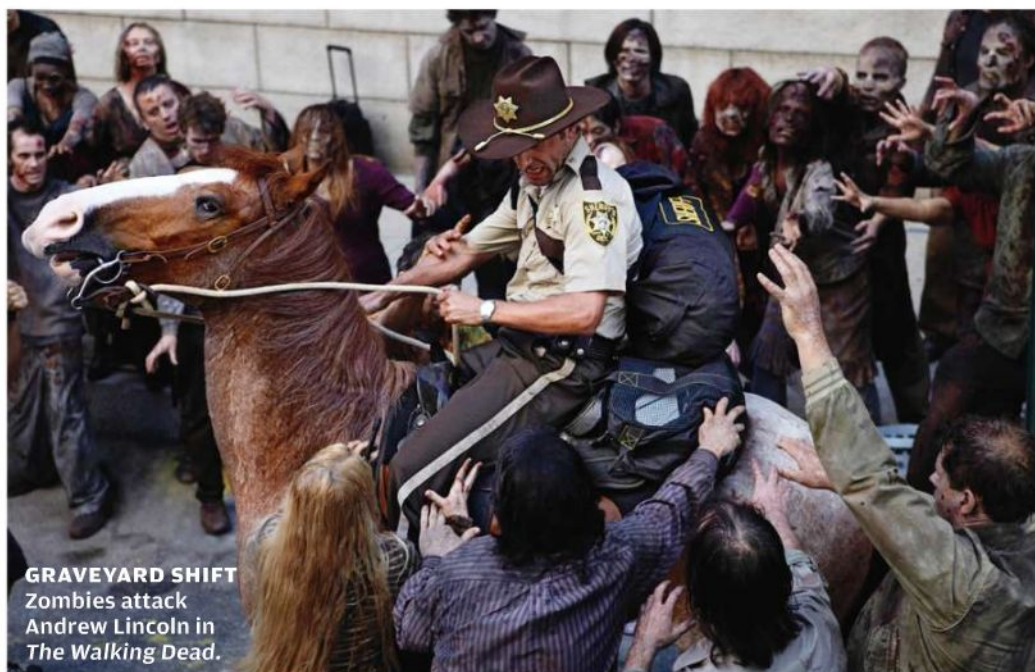


Guns Reloaded

We found one of those Kid Rock impersonators – and it's Axl Rose! (Just kidding, Axl, don't hurt us.) Anyway, when he's not shopping at the Bawitdaba N' Beyond, Mr. Rose is still touring with Gn'R, and on October 14th at London's O2 arena, an actual member of the band – OG bassist Duff McKagan – joined him for the encore. OK, Slash: You're next!



ROCK THE CASBAH
Pop provocateur M.I.A. rocked a psychedelic burqa at Spike TV's Screen Awards in L.A. C'est sheik!



GRAVEYARD SHIFT
Zombies attack
Andrew Lincoln in
The Walking Dead.

Zombie Apocalypse

With its shambling hordes of decaying cannibals, 'The Walking Dead' is the grossest and creepiest new show on TV **By Rob Sheffield**

ZOMBIES ARE NEVER going to be as sexy as vampires. Their rotting bodies just fall apart too easily. (What did the hooker tell the zombie customer? Thanks for the tip!) But they can get infinitely more disgusting, since these bad-brain monsters don't settle for drinking blood – what they crave is entrails, organs, shreds of human flesh to gobble. The point of AMC's amazing new zombie thriller, *The Walking Dead*, is that since there's no way to out-sex *True Blood*, the only thing left is to out-gruesome it. So this is some of the most admirably stomach-churning gore ever to

The Walking Dead
Sundays, 10 p.m., AMC

splatter across the TV screen. Watching these zombies chow down, you catch yourself thinking, "Hey, is that a pancreas? That's a large intestine, right?"

The Walking Dead is seriously creepy zombie action, based on the popular Robert Kirkman comics series that started in 2003. Frank Darabont, of *Shawshank Redemption* fame, serves as executive producer, as

well as writer and director of the pilot, and he doesn't tinker with the comic's basic story. It's the same zombie-apocalypse scenario we've seen before: An ordinary American citizen wakes up to find out that human civilization as we know it has been wiped out by a plague of flesh-munching fiends who walk around in the time-honored *Night of the Living Dead* stagger.

With any zombie story, it's all in the details, and *The Walking Dead* pays virtuosic attention to details, which mostly means specific body parts. Since they can't show bodies getting sexed up à la *True Blood*, they show them getting ripped apart before your eyes. We barely get into the opening scene before the first shot of flies buzzing around a corpse's eyes. A few moments later, a human survivor finds himself menaced by an innocent-looking blond tot who's gone zombie, so he shoots her in the head. As she explodes in a loud splash of blood and brains, she finally drops her little white stuffed bunny.

Our token human is a mild-mannered Southern cop named Rick Grimes (Andrew Lincoln) who gets shot in the line of duty.

He wakes up from a coma in a hospital, only to find that the place is empty, except for a few nurse corpses. An ominously painted sign on the locked doors at the end of the hallway reads DON'T OPEN, DEAD INSIDE. Since he's never seen a zombie movie before, he's a bit confused about what's going on, so naturally he suits up in his old police uniform, arms himself to the teeth and heads

THE WATCH LIST

Blue Bloods

Fridays, 10 p.m., CBS

Funny how the most old-school cop show around is also the weirdest: Donnie Wahlberg is the psycho cop and Tom Selleck is his commissioner dad? Irish-Catholic angst, a killer cast and that Magnum 'stache add up to one of this season's keepers.

Swamp People

Sundays, 10 p.m., History

Welcome to the bayou, where chasing gators is a code of honor. It's like one of those old *Gator Bait* action flicks come to life, as Butch, Junior, T-Mike and others hunt various kinds of rodents you had no idea people actually eat.

to Atlanta, which is overrun by the zombie plague. He makes radio contact with another human survivor, who tells him, "You're surrounded by walkers. That's the bad news." "There's good news?" "No."

That's just where the story begins, and it's also where the explicit zombie scenes go from "paranoid scary" to "pass-the-bucket gross." In one scene, the survivors realize that they're easily sniffed out by the zombies because they smell alive, so they decide to camouflage themselves by coating themselves in human offal. They rip open corpses to paint themselves in intestines, naturally volunteering some of their own vomit in the process. It's authentically disgusting, a real achievement for a horror show on the basic-cable network that customarily gives us the button-down depravity of *Mad Men* and *Breaking Bad*.

Like all zombie stories, *The Walking Dead* has a basic moral question: How do we stay human? And how do bestial acts (like, say, smearing yourself in dead people's organs, or shooting zombie kids) keep you human? It was simpler in the days when zombie tales were basic moral fables. In old-school flicks like *White Zombie*, *I Walked With a Zombie* or *The Plague of the Zombies*, if you got bitten by the zombie bug, it was probably because the decadent Eurotrash aristocrat in your life messed with the wrong island and tried using voodoo to enslave the labor force.

George Romero made zombies infinitely scarier in his 1968 classic, *Night of the Living Dead*, which stripped away the back story of sin and salvation. Suddenly, zombies were everywhere – it was no longer a matter of good guys versus bad guys. That's the world where the survivors in *The Walking Dead* find themselves. They can't even console themselves that it's just a matter of the dead versus the undead. They're just a little *less* dead than the zombies. And staying alive makes them sicker, less human, than they ever imagined possible. Watching them pull it off could make you sick as well, yet in a decidedly awesome way.

RUNNING RUSSELL SIMMONS

MEET THE WOMEN...

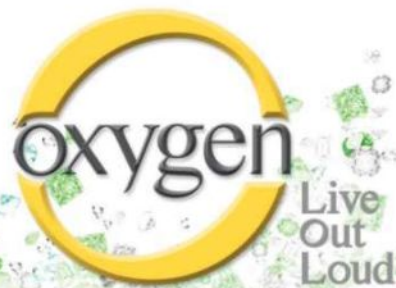


...BEHIND THE MOGUL.

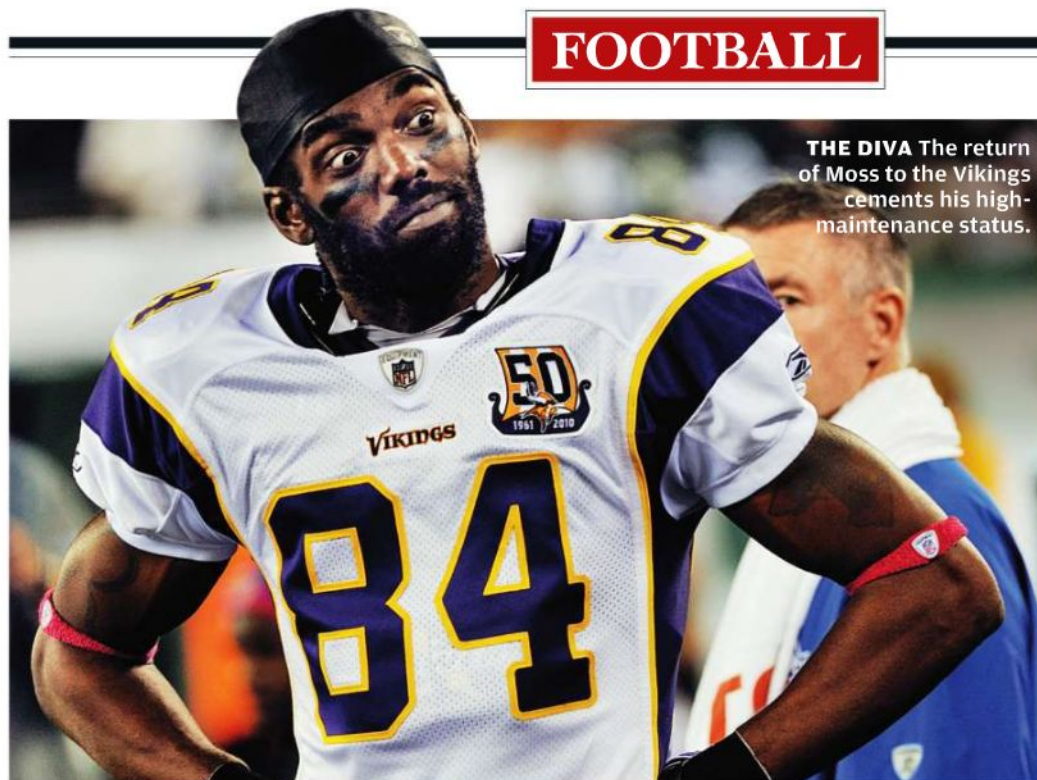
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THE DIVA The return of Moss to the Vikings cements his high-maintenance status.

The Franchise-Killer

It's official, Randy Moss is now the Barry Bonds of the NFL, an all-time great player who never wins his team the big game **By Matt Taibbi**

HIS DOOMED LAST RIDE to nowhere with elderly dong-wagger Brett Favre now firmly commenced, Randy Moss has graduated to a kind of sporting anti-elite previously reserved for just a few athletes in American history: the Hall of Fame Team-Killer.

Moss belongs to the rarest class of athlete who is so individually transcendent that he actually prevents his team from winning. We're not talking here about the guys who were really good and never won the big one – guys like Buffalo's Christ figure Jim Kelly, or Cincinnati's linebacker-eating tackle Anthony Muñoz, or Barry Sanders, whose Lions teams won 79 games in his 10-year career; Sanders won at least 74 of those by himself.

No, in order to be a bona fide Hall of Fame Team-Killer, the perpetual losing has to somehow be your fault, and you need some other particular qualities, too, like for instance being a short-list pick for the best of all time at your position and with a habit of smashing records. In other words, we're talking about just a few names. Baseball has Barry Bonds, Ty Cobb

for sure, and maybe Ted Williams. In the NFL, until this year, there were just a handful of shaky candidates, guys like contract-obsessed runner Eric Dickerson and record-gobbling Isotoner salesman Dan Marino. But Moss is the biggest life-force-draining diva of them all. His anti-karma helped sink two of the greatest teams ever – the '98 Vikings and the '07 Pats – and Moss now has to be considered the Barry Bonds of football.

Moss crushes all the Immortal Team-Killer criteria:

1) Until this year, Moss was so unbelievably superawesome at what he did that even a great, gigantic-testicled coach like Bill Belichick felt compelled to revamp his entire team around Moss' skills. Moss joined a Pats team that won three Super Bowls with defense and ball-control offense; by the first snap of his first game, Moss had Belichick running his lunch-pail team like the 1985 Lakers. The identity of the Moss-era Pats involved unstoppable three-play, 87-yard touchdown drives followed by hideous defensive series in which the once-stout Pats D routinely whiffed on tackles and got pan-

caked on run blocks but then got up laughing because, fuck it, we're scoring again in 19 seconds anyway.

2) Moss' brooding, hyper-intense personality scares the shit out of everyone. There are a lot of guys in sports who get all jacked on the field and scream and grab their crotches, guys like Ray Lewis, but

The Favre Dilemma

A conversation with my conscience

In deciding whether or not to look at the Brett Favre dong shot, I turned to the wisdom of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*: Anything is acceptable as long as it's funny. Googling "Favrecock" definitely is. As a counterexample, Googling the Erin Andrews peephole shots is far from funny, therefore I never looked those up. Simply by pressing SEND, Favre completely wiped out 290 straight games, 70,000 passing yards and 500 touchdowns; 30 years from now, people will say, "Brett Favre? The guy who sexted his cock?" Plus, his ridiculous black wrist-watch in the picture is really funny. **M.T.**

these are basically assembly-line jocks who've been trained to get high on competition, sadism and the American way. Randy Moss is about a hundred times more intense than any of those guys – his Week 1 press tirade this year featured the craziest set of "I fucking need to kill something right now" eyes since Charles Manson. The dude is just ready to explode at any time, and nobody knows why, which leaves all of his teammates acting like the children of an alcoholic, wracked with confusion and self-loathing, overcompensating with affection and compliments to keep Daddy from suddenly kicking the cat, or reaching for his belt.

3) On pure talent, Moss is the greatest wide receiver of all time, and it's really not even close. He came into the league with a six-foot-four frame, 4.3 speed and a seven-foot wingspan; his trademark was the over-the-shoulder one-handed catch that he made without ever having his heart rate rise above 40. But like all Team-Killers, he was routinely neutralized in the playoffs by average players. It won't be an accident that 20 years from now, his best highlights will be from four-touchdown regular-season blowouts over last-place Bills teams. The guy was the ultimate front-runner.

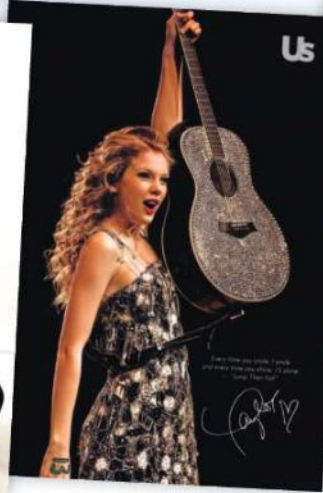
The trade this year is the perfect end to the Moss story. Right before our eyes, he has turned into a washed-up supermodel whose crow's-feet are finally showing. Then, when he had a *Mommie Dearest* freak-out after his last Pats game, Belichick, with his usual hilarious timing, instantly traded Moss' ass to Minnesota, where we can now watch him and Favre engulf and perhaps ultimately destroy the entire Minneapolis metro area in one of the greatest narcissistic death spirals in the history of sports. As a Patriots fan, I know better than to predict another New England run built on Belichick plugging no-name free agents into his Kim Jong-Il-ian system of totalitarian control, but if that happened, it would tell us exactly how much one God-like me-first athlete is worth in the NFL.

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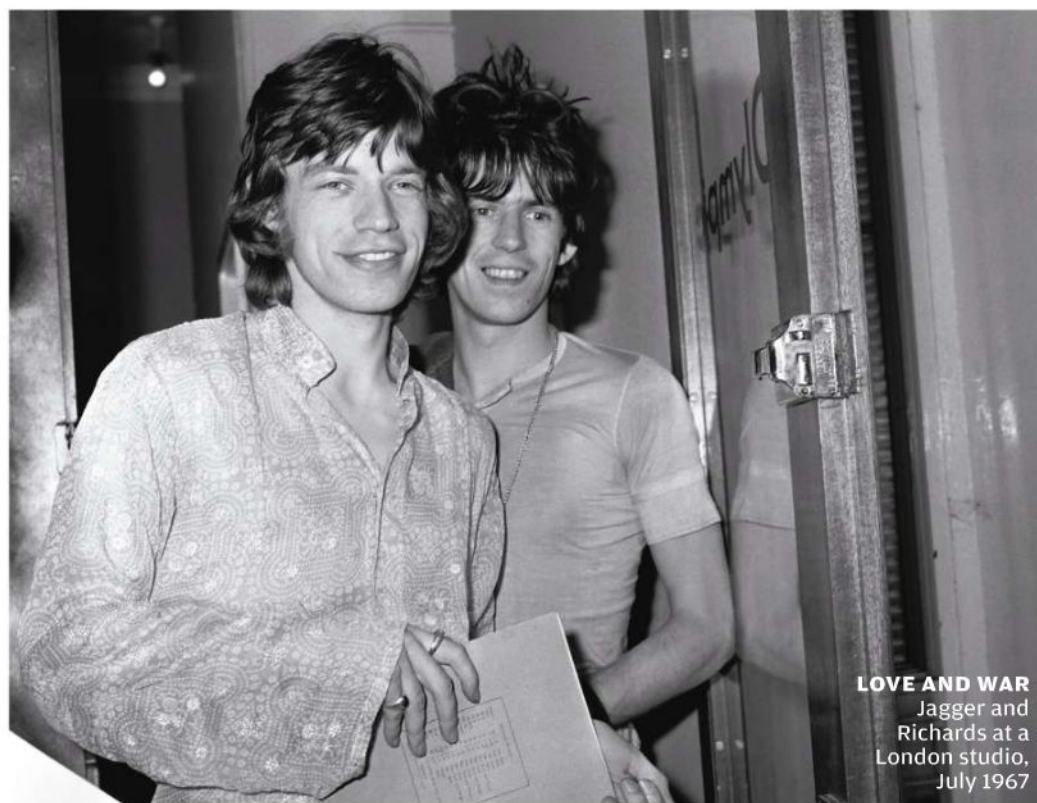
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LOVE AND WAR
Jagger and Richards at a London studio, July 1967

A Classic Rock Memoir

In his new 'Life,' Keith Richards holds nothing back **By Rich Cohen**

IN 1994, WHEN I WAS 26 years old, I was sent, by this magazine, on the road with the Rolling Stones. The band was promoting *Voodoo Lounge*, the second album it had released since "the break," the unofficial split that came in 1987, when Mick Jagger announced his decision to skip a Stones tour and instead go on tour to support his solo album. I spent the first weeks of that assignment in Toronto, where the band was piecing together a set list, picking songs. There were long nights, nasty asides, great music and, now and then, moments of transcendence.

Over time, I began to catch glimpses of the constant tension between Jagger and Keith Richards. Before a show in North Carolina, I watched Richards, a cigarette dangling from his mouth, smirk as Jagger went through vocal scales in a nearby trailer. "What can he do in there that we can't do in here?" asked Richards, dropping to do five quick one-arm push-ups, the tip of his cigarette burning a kind of signature into the carpet.

But it wasn't until after my story, when I got an angry phone call from Jagger's assistant, that I came to really understand the steel behind the Stones. "You've misnamed this article, haven't you?" he snapped at me. "You have called it 'On the Road With the Rolling Stones,' but that's not right. You should have called it 'I Love Keith Richards and Want to Have His Baby.'"

There it was, laid out for me, the essence of the Stones. It's not just the music, Chicago blues run through the blender, that ignites the band. It's the play of styles, the push and pull of magnetic forces, the frontman grooving before the riff machine. That's why there will always be more demand for Mick and Keith together than there will ever be for Mick or Keith apart.

And yet, never once, in the entire course of that summer, did I see the men stand together, talk or laugh together. On-stage, in arenas where fans had come to see the spectacle of a friendship as much as they'd come to hear the music,

they were in separate orbits. Richards interacted with the band, shouted to the bass player or drummer, while Jagger danced in the ether, in a system of his own.

When I questioned Jagger about the rift, he smiled and changed the subject. I asked Richards the same questions: What happened? How can you still work together? He laughed in that deep way of pirates and life-long smokers. "When you break a bone," he told me, "you take time, let it heal, then be careful never to break that same bone in the same place again."

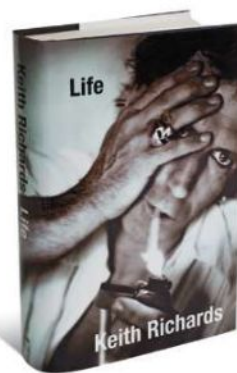
With his new book, *Life* by Keith Richards (with James Fox), the guitarist has broken that bone again, that one and many others. He has opened the old wounds, relived the ancient rivalries, binges, busts, cold turkeys, near-deaths and

actual deaths. The book is a chronicle of an era, rock & roll in its golden age, little clubs and struggling bands, studio musicians and recording sessions. It's a drug memoir, too, among the best ever written, but mostly it's the story of a friendship, in its first flush, and in its death throes. "I used to love to hang with Mick," Richards writes, "but I haven't gone to his dressing room in, I don't think, 20 years. Sometimes I miss my friend. Where the hell did he go?"

The book starts in Dartford, England, a small, glum town outside London, which Richards makes sound almost Dickensian. "Everyone in Dartford was a thief," he writes. "It runs in the blood. The old rhyme commemorates the unchanging character of the place: 'Sutton for mutton, Kirkby for beef, South Darne for gingerbread, Dartford for a thief.'"

This is where Keith picks up his first guitar ("a sweet, lovely, little lady"), and hears "Heartbreak Hotel" on the radio for the first time ("When I woke up the next day, I was a different guy"). Most important, Dartford is where Keith meets Mick, first as boys, then again when Keith is at art school, being trained for a career as an adman, and Mick is commuting to the London School of Economics. This meeting, on a train platform, is one of the mythic encounters of the pop age. Trotsky meets Lenin; Bill Gates meets Paul Allen. There would be consequences.

From there, the story unfolds in flashes: first Mick and Keith and friends playing in a tiny club (they call themselves Little Boy Blue and the Blue Boys); Mick and Keith answering an ad put in *Jazz News* by Brian Jones ("He was calling himself Elmo Lewis. He wanted to be Elmore James"); then living in the squalor of dirty dishes and high jinks ("Mick had come back drunk to visit Brian, found he wasn't there and screwed his



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old lady"); followed by the picturesque hassle of early days ("We despised money, we despised cleanliness, we just wanted to be black motherfuckers. . .") – culminating in the rocket ship to stardom. "The Beatles couldn't fill in all of the spots on the charts. We filled in the gaps."

RICHARDS CAREFULLY explains the process by which he and Jagger wrote all those tunes. It usually started with a riff dreamed up by Richards, a sharp Chuck Berry-like run of chords, to which he would attach a phrase ("I can't get no satisfaction," "Hey, you, get off of my cloud"), then pass it to Jagger, who figured out a melody and wrote the lyrics.

Richards never explicitly says that his contribution is the greater one. But he makes it clear where he thinks the art lies. Once the foundation is in place, he implies, the rest is almost busywork. Even when he has something nice to say about Jagger, he gets in a dig: "Mick is one of the best natural blues harp players I've heard," he says. "[It's] the one place where you don't hear any calculation."

As you read on, you feel that all those little swipes are about something bigger, grander. Betrayal. Honor. What a friend owes. How people grow apart. Though *Life* tells so much about the creation of music, the art of guitar and the pettiness of the legal authorities, it's really about the way things fall apart.

Addiction is the recurring theme – to music, to fame, and most of all to drugs, heroin being the most seductive. As a way to cope with the pressure and hard work of playing guitar for the Rolling Stones, Richards makes a smack habit sound almost sensible. How else can you toil 200 straight hours? In one passage, he writes of feeding his habit on the road: "It was difficult in the '70s to get hypodermics in America. So when I traveled I would wear a hat and use a needle to fix a little feather to the hatband. . . . OK, but now I need the syringe. I'd go down to FAO Schwarz, the toy shop right across . . . from the Plaza. And if you went to the third

floor, you could buy a doctor and nurse play set, a little plastic box with a red cross on it. That had the barrel and the syringe that fitted the needle that I'd brought. I'd go round, 'I'll have three teddy bears, I'll have that remote-control car, oh, and give me two doctor and nurse kits! My niece, you know, she's really into that. Must encourage her.'"

You can quote a thousand episodes in this book just as great. After a few hours, you feel like you've been with Richards when he is hung over and rundown nasty, and with him when he is coked up and flying. But the very things that make the book so much fun – this is the junkie's-eye view of the world – limit the view the reader gets of the world around Richards. He jabs Jagger again and again ("It was

a deal with CBS Records for three solo albums. "The Rolling Stones spent a lot of time building up integrity," Richards writes, "and the way Mick handled his solo career jeopardized all that, and it severely pissed me off."

But where Richards sees abandonment, another person might see Jagger fleeing a madhouse. The way Richards speaks of his addiction is fascinating, but it's probably less so if you were depending on the guy. Explaining why he survived, Richards credits the nature of the shit he ingested. "The reason I'm here is probably that we only ever took, as much as possible, the real stuff, the top-quality stuff. Cocaine I only got into because it was pure pharmaceutical – boom."

Of course, this is classic junkie talk: I'm fine so long as

ging the porcelain. . . . I don't think John ever left my house except horizontally."

Life is not a standard addiction memoir, because Richards sees his addiction as anything but standard. It's not a weakness, not a disease. It's martyrdom. "They imagined me, they made me, the folks out there created this folk hero," he writes. "Bless their hearts. I'll do the best I can to fulfill their needs. They're wishing me to do things that they can't. They've got to do this job, they've got this life . . . but at the same time, inside of them is a raging Keith Richards. When you talk of a folk hero, they've written the script for you and you better fulfill it. And I did my best." In other words, Richards taunts death so that we can be free.

Much of the trouble between Jagger and Richards must come from the fact that they are locked in a partnership that started when they were too young to make lifelong commitments. How would you get along with your high school friends if you still had to depend on them today? Richards, a sentimentalist, cannot help but compare, with sadness, how it was then to how it is now. "Mick has changed tremendously," he writes, "only thinking [back] do I remember with regrets how completely tight Mick and I were in the early years of the Stones. First off, we never had to question the aim. We were unerring in where we wanted to go, what it should sound like, so we didn't have to discuss it."

In the end, it does not matter that Richards is unfair to Jagger or that Richards sees the world through a coke-addled lens. In this book, as in his music, Richards' obligation belongs not to Jagger or anyone else. It belongs to the reader, and to the art. At this, Richards succeeds brilliantly. The result is a classic book of rock & roll.

Of course, it's interesting to remember that the Stones are still a working band. This book is not just an artifact, but part of the story it chronicles. So here's the big question: Will the Rolling Stones, who survived the drugs, death, madness and chaos, survive the prose of Keith Richards? **4**

"This might be the only drug memoir ever that features no redemptive cleanup, no 12 steps, no regrets, no apologies. But the victims of his excess pile up."

the beginning of the '80s when Mick started to become unbearable"). But what we never see is what those years must have been like for Jagger – to be in business with a junkie is no easy trick. Richards' world consists of best friends and father figures, all of whom happen to be junkies; and to any junkie, a nonuser is an enemy, i.e., Jagger. By Richards' own account, Jagger is always there to come to his rescue. "I have to say that during the bust in Toronto, in fact during all busts, Mick looked after me with great sweetness. He ran things . . . and marshaled the forces that saved me."

Of course, it's never enough.

Richards' real beef comes later, in the late 1970s, when he gets off heroin and wants to reassert himself. But Jagger had taken control in the drug years and didn't want to relinquish it. "I realized Mick had got all of the strings in his hands and he didn't want to let go of a single one," writes Richards. "I didn't know power and control were that important to Mick."

The injury was compounded in 1983 when Jagger cut

I get the top drawer, etc. And though Richards does make standard warnings of the don't-try-this-at-home variety, drug abuse has never seemed so fun or glamorous as it does here. This might be the only celebrity drug memoir ever written that features no redemptive cleanup, no 12 steps, no regrets, no apologies.

But the victims of his excess pile up. There is an impressive list of people who partied with Richards and died or just went batty: among them, Gram Parsons and John Phillips, his friends; Anita Pallenberg, his love. Richards takes responsibility for none of it, unaware of his effect on the would-be madmen who wanted to trade shots with a legend. "The thing with John [Lennon] – for all his vaunted bravado – he couldn't really keep up," writes Richards. "He'd try and take anything I took but without my good training. A little bit of this, a little bit of that, couple of downers, a couple of uppers, coke and smack, then I'm going to work. I was freewheeling. John would inevitably end up in my john, hug-

Rolling Stone

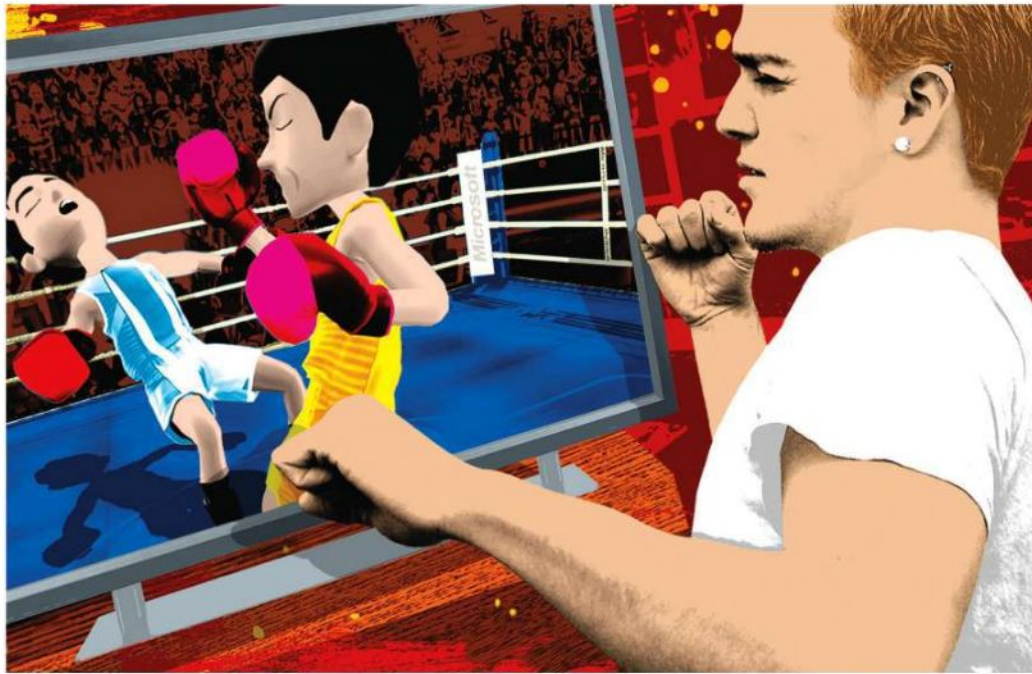
THE

70s

THE INSIDE STORIES FROM THE DECADE THAT ROCKED

THE INSIDE STORIES FROM THE DECADE THAT ROCKED

ON SALE NOW WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD



The Case for No Buttons

PlayStation's Move and Microsoft's Kinect make games more physical than ever. But are they more than party tricks? By Chris Suellentrop

WHEN THE NINTENDO Wii arrived in the nation's living rooms four years ago, it seemed to herald a new age of games: For a few hundred dollars, we were all going to get something close to a home virtual-reality machine, as the narrative ambitions of the best game designers were augmented by this new kind of physical play.

It didn't happen. Almost half a decade later, the Wii is a go-to party system, something to haul out for quick and shallow fun when friends or family come over. But if you're interested in games as an emerging, interactive art form, the Wii doesn't have a lot to offer. You can't play *Halo: Reach*, *Grand Theft Auto IV* or *Bioshock* on a Wii. And that's just for starters.

So gamers can be forgiven if they're approaching this fall's motion-control offerings with no small amount of suspicion. (A sample complaint: The rise of motion controllers "kinda bums me out," wrote one game-magazine reader. "I like my games as they are now.") Sony's

PlayStation Move is a souped-up Wii on high-definition steroids: a motion controller that, because it's paired with Sony's Eye camera, can detect not only the movements of the controllers in your hands but also their locations in space. Microsoft's Kinect, for the Xbox 360, is even more ambitious. It combines a camera, depth sensor and microphone to track your entire body's movements – without the need for you to wield any controllers at all.

Move brings a new level of precision to motion gaming (along with a controller that looks vaguely like a sex toy), and Kinect creates a

sense of full-body immersion in a video game. Kinect feels like this season's Wii – the gaming technology that gets nongamers excited about video games again.

Like the Wii, both Move and Kinect have packaged their best launch titles with the system. For \$100, a Move starter bundle gets you the Eye camera, a single Move controller (you really need at least two, though, so expect to spend an-

other \$50) and *Sports Champions*, a terrific collection of sports games – disc golf, gladiator duel, archery, beach volleyball, bocce, table tennis – that shows off the Move's potential. The table tennis feels like actual table tennis – you have to reach to hit the ball in space, rather than just timing your swing, as you do in *Wii Sports*. After you win a series of games, you get to see yourself looking back from your TV set, hoisting a paddle or a volleyball.

THE PLAY LIST

Call of Duty: Black Ops

Activision (Xbox 360, PS3)

Black Ops makes you a special-forces soldier in the Cold War. For most fans of this monster series, that alone would be enough, but there are also some cool tweaks: a new rewards system, 3D capability and (yes!) a scoped crossbow.

Dance Central

MTV/Harmonix (Xbox 360)

The most immediately compelling game of the season: Most dance games just track your feet, but *Central* follows your entire body's moves, thanks to Kinect.

For \$150, Kinect comes bundled with a Kinect sensor and *Kinect Adventures*, a set of minigames that asks you to leap around your living room in the sweaty but addictive Kinect style. You can use your head, arms and legs to block a swarm of oncoming balls in *Rallyball*, or dodge obstacles in *Reflex Ridge* by sidestepping, ducking and leaping into the air. This is the game that you'll want to show off to your relatives. After each minigame, the system displays a series of photos – saved in the Kinect's "show off and share" center – of the players, frozen in an array of embarrassing but amusing in-action poses. Other games, sold separately, have instant nongamer appeal as well: *Kinect Sports* has an excellent co-op beach volleyball mode that has players jumping toward the net to spike the ball, and *Dance Central* – from the makers of *Rock Band* – portends a dystopian line-dancing future, where everyone knows the same moves for songs like "Poker Face."

As cool as Kinect and Move are, for now you're looking at something closer to digital Twister – the kind of games that replace family board games rather than replacing *Red Dead Redemption*. But both systems have the potential to give dedicated gamers, those 18-to-35-year-old men who make up the core of the market, a new way to play their kind of video games, too. "The hardcore games are going to become that much better, that much more immersive," says Alex Kipman, the director of incubation for Xbox.

"You can still do casual, not very deep gameplay experiences," says Dr. Richard Marks, a senior researcher for the PlayStation's research-and-development team. "But we wanted to make sure we didn't make a controller that would be limited to those." Marks argues that once the magic of Kinect wears off – and he admits that it's very impressive magic – gamers will want to have a controller back in their hands, at least for certain experiences. "For something like shooting, there's just no answer," he says. "There's nothing that replaces the button." 



Hyperprecise:
The PlayStation Move
controller

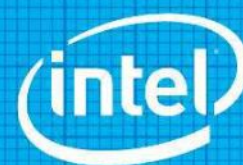
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The Miracle Seeker

Bill Gates is investing millions to halt global warming by creating an inexhaustible supply of carbon-free energy

★ By Jeff Goodell ★

BILL GATES IS A RELATIVE newcomer to the fight against global warming, but he's already shifting the debate over climate change. In recent years, America's wealthiest man has begun to tackle energy issues in a major way, investing millions in everything from high-capacity batteries to machines that can scrub carbon dioxide out of the air. With a personal fortune of \$50 billion, Gates has the resources to give his favorite solutions a major boost. But it's his status as America's most successful entrepreneur that gives his views the most clout: "His voice carries enormous credibility about how technology can be used to solve global warming," says Fred Krupp, head of the Environmental Defense Fund.

When it comes to climate and energy, Gates is a radical consumerist. In his view, energy consumption is good – it just needs to be clean energy. As he sees it,

the biggest challenge is not persuading Americans to buy more efficient refrigerators or trade in their SUVs for hybrids; it's figuring out how to raise the standard of living in the developing world without wrecking the



climate. Achieving that, he argues, will require an "energy miracle" – a technological breakthrough that creates an inexhaustible supply of carbon-free energy. Although he doesn't know what form that miracle will take, he knows we need to think big. "We don't really grasp the scale of the problem we're facing," Gates tells me in his office overlooking Lake Washington in Seattle. "The right goal is not to cut our carbon emissions in half. The right goal is zero."



Since leaving Microsoft, you're best known for your work combating poverty and disease in the developing world. Why add climate change and energy issues to the list?

Well, energy would be superinteresting and important even if it wasn't for the terrible climate problem. The thing that really changed in civilization – only about 250 years ago – was an intense use of energy. It changed everything: transportation and food and appliances and communication. Today, we're very dependent on cheap energy. We just take it for granted



"A REALLY BIG BREAKTHROUGH"
Gates says our best hope lies in pursuing "many, many paths."

– all the things you have in the house, the way industry works. I'm interested in making sure the poorest countries don't get left behind, so figuring out how they can get cheap energy is very, very important. Whether it's fertilizing crops or building housing, a lot of it comes down to energy. *So we need more energy for the poor and less for the rich?*

It's the poorer people in tropical zones who will get really hit by climate change – as well as some ecosystems, which nobody wants to see disappear. This is a global thing, and it's really hard for people to get their minds around the amount of reduction required. Every year we're increasing the amount of CO₂ we put out, and yet we're talking about an 80 percent reduction. To make that happen, the rich world is going to have to be way down – way down – in energy use.

You say we need an "energy miracle" to halt climate change. What do you mean?

To have the kind of reliable energy we expect, and to have it be cheaper and zero carbon, we need to pursue every available

path to achieve a really big breakthrough. I certainly don't want the government to only pick a few paths, because our probability of success is much higher if we're pursuing many, many paths. Think about all the people who are getting up every day and working on solutions that may seem kind of delusional even though the odds against them are higher than they realize. The world needs all these people trying things out and believing in them. In IT, there were tons of dead ends – but there was enough of a success rate to have an unbelievable impact.

Handicap it for me: Which technological paths look the most promising to you?

You can certainly limit things by their potential scale. There are a few places on the planet that can produce tidal energy, for example, but that alone won't ever be gigantic. Geothermal, because of the formations and the amount of heat that comes through, is also going to be pretty minor. So what you're left with is: Can you make fossil fuels carbon-free? That's important to pursue but very hard to achieve.



NEXT-GENERATION NUKES Gates hopes to build a new kind of reactor that would rely on waste uranium for fuel, producing cheaper energy with zero carbon emissions.

How about developing technology to capture and store carbon from coal plants?

America's Power [a coal-industry PR group] has these ads recently where they're talking about "clean coal." But there are a number of steps required to do that, and they aren't really being done. For instance: The government has got to take responsibility for the long-term waste. They messed up on nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain, and the long-term waste from clean coal would be a billion times larger. The issue of "where to put the waste" is the hardest because of the consensus that's required.

What about nuclear energy? You're very involved with developing what are known as next-generation nuclear plants.

The nuclear approach I'm involved in is called a traveling-wave reactor, which uses waste uranium for fuel. There's a lot of things that have to go right for that dream to come true – many decades of building demo plants, proving the economics are right. But if it does, you could have cheaper energy with no CO₂ emissions. You'll still have issues with safety, proliferation, cost and fuel availability. But part of the beauty of the nuclear path, compared to all the energy-farming approaches, is you don't have a problem with location and storage. *By energy farming, you mean stuff like wind and solar?*

Wind, solar, anything where you're just collecting the natural flux. The trouble with energy farming is that the energy isn't always *where* you want to use it, and it isn't always *when* you want to use it. So you have a tough transmission problem, which is often across political boundaries, and you have a tough storage problem – "tough" as in "may not be able to invent the solution."

JEFF GOODELL, a contributing editor, wrote about the BP spill in RS 1110.

Does the work of climate deniers play a part in preventing action?

People are at so many different places on this problem, it's hard to get a dialogue going. There are people who don't even know there's something important here at all – people who think, "Geez, is this real?" That's unfortunate. The fact that we're still arguing over "Is it real, yes or no?" has kind of clouded the debate. The real issue is, "Wait a minute – how soon and how big are these effects, and what does mitigation look like?"

You've just come back from China, which many people argue is beating us at energy innovation. Do you agree?

In order for the United States to do the right things for the long term, it appears to be helpful for us to have the prospect of humiliation. Sputnik helped us fund good science – really good science, the semiconductor came out of it. And in the 1980s, we were driven by state-sanctioned racism – the idea that Japan was going to take over everything. But look at consumer electronics today – it's Xbox, iPhone. Sometimes you overestimate your rival, and that can actually help.

Energy innovation is not a nationalistic game. If tomorrow some other country invented cheap energy with no CO₂ output, would that be a bad day or a good day? For anybody who's reasonable, that would be, like, the best day ever. If all you care about is America's relative position, every day since the end of World War II has really been bad for you. So when somebody says to me, "Oh, the Chinese are helping to lower the cost of it, or creating something that emits less CO₂," I say, "Great." The Chinese are also working on new drugs. When your children get sick, they might be able to take those drugs.

Let's say President Obama comes to you and says, "We need to make this energy

transition happen quicker. Bill, you are going to be my energy guy." What are the two or three things you would tell him we should do right now, politics aside?

The first is a pretty dramatic increase in research and development – about \$10 billion a year extra. The U.S. government has an annual budget of \$3.5 trillion, so that's not a lot of money percentage-wise. To pay for it, you could tax energy usage at a very modest level, between one and two percent. That would make it budget-neutral.

Then you need a real energy plan. One example: If you're going to get sun and wind power out of the center of the country, you have to do some amazing transmission stuff out to the coasts. But if off-shore wind is going to be gigantic, then the need for transmission is less imperative. Building transmission takes decades, so you've got to really have a plan that considers each option based on the likelihood of success. You have to write down the probabilities so you can shift resources as the probabilities shift.

What have you learned about energy politics in your trips to Washington?

The politics are hard. Anybody who thinks that once upon a time you just called up George Washington and he solved a messy problem like this – it's never happened that way.

The most important thing is to start working on the long-lead-time stuff early. That's why the funding for R&D feels urgent to me. If you said to me, "Hey, you can get R&D now in return for a carbon cap eight years from now," that would be a pretty good trade. The key thing about R&D is, it causes you to build different energy plants when the ones you have wear out. That's a 30-year decision, what you're putting in that place. If people knew there will be a carbon tax during the life of that plant, that really starts to change the decision.

What grade would you give the Obama administration on their energy policy?

I don't think I'd give them any different grade than they'd give themselves. They wanted to get additional R&D money, and they wanted to get some type of price signal in on carbon, and they haven't succeeded in doing it yet, so I think they'd give themselves an incomplete and I'd give them an incomplete. It may stay that way. Should they be trying harder? They have a lot of things going on.

Are you scared about the kind of world – and the kind of climate – your kids will inherit?

Climate change is a terrible problem, and it absolutely needs to be solved. It deserves to be a huge priority. But when you think of kids, you think of more immediate things like, "Will terrorists blow up a nuclear bomb?" When you start thinking about kids, I hope they fasten their seat belts. There's a lot to worry about. ☐



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CONAN UNBOUND

OVERCOMING HIS DEPRESSION AND ANGER,
THE COMEDY GENIUS GETS READY FOR ONE
LAST LATE-NIGHT RIDE **BY MARK BINELLI**

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT TRACHTENBERG

IN JULY, SHORTLY AFTER HIS LEGALLY Prohibited From Being Funny on Television Tour wrapped up, Conan O'Brien began visiting the set of his new talk show, at Warner Bros. Studios in Burbank, California. For various reasons, the show had not been staffed yet, nor had the set been built, so on those days, O'Brien would occasionally pause en route to his office and stand alone in a giant, empty warehouse. As career metaphors go, one could do worse: At least the warehouse wasn't on fire, or dripping blood from the ceiling, or filled, floor to rafters, with an existentially crushing number of identical wooden crates,





**READY FOR
TAKEOFF**
O'Brien in Los
Angeles in
September



like the warehouse at the end of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

O'Brien had lost his dream job as host of *The Tonight Show* in January, at a speed (seven months!) almost as humiliating as the circumstances of his departure (ousted for Jay Leno, which is the comedy-world equivalent of being left at the altar for a cast member of *Jersey Shore*). "My wife says those first couple of months, the thing I said most often was, 'Wait a minute, what just happened?'" O'Brien recalls.

"Those weeks after the tour, where not much was going on, Conan was miserable," confirms his wife, Liza Powell, a blunt and dryly funny former advertising executive with whom O'Brien has two children. "That was when he was the most depressed." Powell says she had "all sorts of grand designs" about keeping her idled spouse busy: He would be responsible for camp drop-offs, he would cook dinner at least one night a week. None of which ended up happening. O'Brien did go for long bicycle rides, and read lots of history books. At a parents' night at their son Beckett's preschool, there was a stack of volunteer sign-up sheets, and O'Brien, who still had too much time on his hands, be-

Contributing editor MARK BINELLI wrote the Jay-Z cover story in RS 1107.

FAMILY GUY

Backstage during the last week of *Late Night With Conan O'Brien* in 2009 with his son, Beckett, and his wife, Liza Powell

came overly ambitious and started signing up for everything: "Oh, I'd love to come talk to the kids about natural history!"

"He was in the house all the time," Powell recalls. "I said, 'This can't last - it'll drive us crazy!' Literally every 10 minutes, he'd poke his head in the room and say, 'I don't wanna bother you, but do you know where the Band-Aids are?' 'I don't wanna bother you, but do you know how to use the phone?' He was so sweet about it, and I felt like such a jerk. But seriously, I almost rented an office for him."

The morning after O'Brien's final *Tonight Show* - his second-highest-rated episode ever, quadrupling his average nightly viewership - he and Powell drove up to a resort in Montecito. "I felt like I'd just been in a car accident," O'Brien says. "Like a crazy mix of elation, anger, sorrow. Confusion was a big one." That night, when they entered the dining room and the other guests stood up and applauded, O'Brien says, "It almost made me cry."

An overachieving golden boy since high school (where he was class valedictorian), on through college (Harvard, where

he was twice voted president of *The Harvard Lampoon*, something that had only happened once before in the history of the venerable humor magazine) and his early career (staff gigs at *Saturday Night Live* and *The Simpsons*, the twin Holy Grails of the comedy world for the aspiring writer), O'Brien had been plucked from obscurity to host a major-network talk show - at a time when people still watched network television - when he was a preposterously young-looking 30 years old. Losing *The Tonight Show* was the first time he had ever failed so publicly, and in such epic fashion. His longtime sidekick, Andy Richter, has said, "It was traumatic for Conan."

"I hated to see him in such a state of tension and unhappiness," Powell says. "It was very painful for him to let go of this hallowed ground that he'd finally got a chance to stand on." But, she goes on, "There were so many factors at work, such a confluence of change that had to do with so much more than him. The truth is, *The Tonight Show* was the definition of cultural relevancy for decades. And all of a sudden, it's not. That's not Conan's fault. It's not anybody's fault. It just happened. And it's no longer a show he should be pinning his life's hopes on hosting."

Indeed, the spontaneous pro-Conan Internet campaign generated by fans in Jan-

uary – complete with Shepard Fairey-style iconography and its very own slogan, “I’m With Coco” – was driven largely by young people for whom the venerable institution of *The Tonight Show* meant little or nothing. For some, the show might have even made O’Brien less cool by association. *The Tonight Show* had been unhip for a very, very long time, not just for the past 17 years it has been hosted by Jay Leno, but for (let’s be honest) pretty much all of the Eighties – really, the last time it was hip, Johnny Carson and his guests were still chain-smoking on the air – and so watching O’Brien move behind the desk of desks felt less like an ascension and more like a loss, a co-opting of our guy. Consequently, when O’Brien was undone by NBC’s fecklessness and Leno’s treachery, it only affirmed what we knew all along: He’d thrown his lot in with the wrong crowd.

Overnight, O’Brien not only regained the underdog status he’d held for much of his career, but actually found himself in a wholly new position: rebranded as an indie icon. In the months that followed, he grew a beard, played Bonnaroo and cut an improvised spoken-word single and a rock covers album for Jack White’s label. (“Conan’s was the only late-night show I ever wanted to play,” White says. “Letterman is so cold to people, and Leno is for senior citizens. I played a live guitar solo on Conan’s desk once. If I did that on *Letterman*, he’d probably have had a coronary.”) When O’Brien announced his 30-city comedy tour via Twitter, without any traditional promotion whatsoever, it sold out in hours.

Of course, the soaring ratings during the last week of O’Brien’s *Tonight Show* can be attributed to morbid curiosity. Suddenly, celebrities who normally only show us their public personas were openly displaying real emotions, live on TV. Had we ever seen O’Brien look genuinely hurt or angry before? Or, for that matter, Leno squirm like the night Jimmy Kimmel mocked him to his face? Or David Letterman display such unadulterated schadenfreudean delight as with his belittling impersonations

of his old rival? It was reality television writ large, and riveting to watch.

But something else happened to O’Brien once he’d been denied his stay of execution. He got better: funnier, more confident, the sort of *Tonight Show* host fans always hoped he’d be. “When Conan took over, I thought he was doing a really good job, but I felt, sitting on the couch, that it wasn’t as intimate as the old show,” says his friend Garry Shandling, who regularly guest-hosted *The Tonight Show* in the Eighties and brilliantly played a fictional late-night

host on *The Larry Sanders Show*. “Merely by circumstances: It’s a bigger stage, a

gest promotional campaign in television history,” O’Brien’s manager told *The New York Times*. (TBS broadcasts professional-basketball and major-league-baseball play-offs, and has already unveiled a number of lavish promo spots and a Conan blimp.) TBS would also be giving O’Brien a strong lead-in for his demographic with reruns of *The Office* and *Family Guy*.

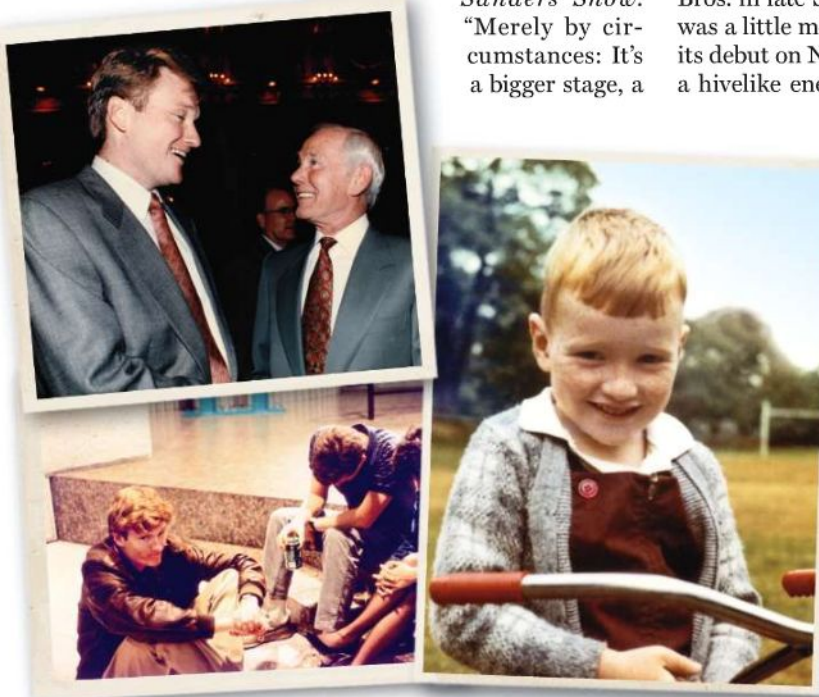
How, exactly, to capture the elusive spark of O’Brien’s *Tonight Show* swan song and subsequent tour and funnel it into another talk show is the challenge Team O’Brien now faces. When I met O’Brien at Warner Bros. in late September, his show, *Conan*, was a little more than a month away from its debut on November 8th, and there was a hivelike energy around his offices (still

largely unfurnished) and on the set (still very much under construction). “This is the second studio I’ve designed in 15 months,” O’Brien says. “I’m thinking I might get into building studios instead of comedy. You know, I’ll be like a consultant: I can meet with you, get your vibe.”

O’Brien, who is 47, is primarily known as a verbal comic. But at six feet four, he has a physical comedian’s body: O’Brien is so long-limbed and gangling, it’s not a huge jump for him to trans-

form himself into a giant puppet, as he does at the start of most shows, and his gaunt, expressive face possesses a clownish elasticity. (His sidekick, Richter, is short and stocky, rounding out their classical fatty-skinny comedy team in a way that O’Brien surely appreciates.) O’Brien loves to joke about his pasty complexion, and these jokes are not exaggerations. In person, when the light hits his skin the right way, it can look alarmingly, just-north-of-translucently pale, calling to mind a freckly parchment. His hair remains sculpted in its signature half-pompadour, and he’s also held on to the beard, and wears it well, along with, this afternoon, a black leather jacket, black jeans, a tight navy-blue T-shirt and black Adidas sneakers, looking less like a guy who used to wear a suit to work every night than like a guy looking to score an extra Pavement ticket. (O’Brien plans to keep the beard for his show, at least initially: “I think if I come back cleanshaven, it’s almost saying, ‘OK, that fun ride is over.’”)

O’Brien enters Stage 15, where his set is being built, striding past a couple of workmen laying down a wooden floor. No seats have been installed yet, and there’s



GROWING UP CONAN

O’Brien with idol Johnny Carson in 1993; as a boy in Massachusetts; as a writer for the short-lived Fox show *Wilton North Report*, 1987 (clockwise from top left).

slightly different crowd. These dynamics are subtle,” Shandling says he noticed “something shifted” in O’Brien’s work once he knew he was leaving. “He got very loose those last weeks,” Shandling says. “He was more present, more honest. My acting teacher used to say, ‘Do you have the courage to discover something about yourself while the camera is running?’ That’s what makes great performances. And I think the reason Conan got so much attention at the end, and lit up the screen like that, is because he was discovering something about himself while the camera was on.”

WHEN O’BRIEN LEFT NBC, it was widely assumed he would take his show to Fox, which wanted to create its own late-night franchise and began courting him heavily. But when unlikely candidate TBS entered the picture, the network promised “the big-

The Sound of Team Coco

Exclusive: Hear tracks from O’Brien’s album of rock covers with Jack White at rollingstone.com.

no stage, either, just the beginnings of a curved backdrop and a cluster of oversize lights hanging from the rafters. O'Brien wants the new set to be tighter, with his desk in the middle, flanked by the band. "It's almost like physics: The smaller the space, the greater the pressure," O'Brien says. "Which is better for comedy. Those wide, arcing shots that make your set seem like a Leni Riefenstahl rally, with thousands of fans, those are OK for the first five seconds of a show. But then what you're really trying to do is something that's quite small. Comedy is delicate. You're chatting with people and creating funny little moments." We wander through the green-room into his dressing room, where another door leads directly to the set. "In case I don't like the guest," O'Brien says. "I call it the Pauly Shore Door."

Then O'Brien, a cinephile who constantly references old films, excitedly leads me to the front of the building, where a bronze plaque lists all of the movies filmed on this very set: *The Petrified Forest* (one of O'Brien's all-time favorites, starring Humphrey Bogart as a hostage-holding killer), *Mildred Pierce*, *The Big Sleep*, *Strangers on a Train*, *Giant*, *The Music Man* (another favorite, and the inspiration for one of O'Brien's best-known scripts for *The Simpsons*, the one where an unscrupulous traveling monorail salesman attempts to hornswoggle the people of Springfield). "Look at this: It's like the Vietnam Wall," he says, grinning as he runs a finger along the list. "Some of the greatest films ever made, and then—" His finger stops at 1985, and his voice rises. "*The Goonies*! Did they really have to put that one on here?" He shakes his head. "People younger than me love this movie. It's their *Citizen Kane*." At some point on the show, O'Brien hopes to reunite the cast.

THE FIRST TIME O'BRIEN LIVED in Los Angeles, he was 22. He'd moved out with his college friend and writing partner Greg Daniels, who would later create the American version of *The Office*. They'd worked together at *The Harvard Lampoon*. In L.A., they wrote for the HBO sketch-comedy show *Not Necessarily the News* and shared an apartment; if one of them had a date, they had to give the other a heads-up, because they also shared a car. (Though O'Brien says that this problem didn't come up very often in those days.) O'Brien hated L.A. then, having what he calls "a stereotypical Woody Allen reaction" to the city. He likes it now, and felt ready for a change after years in New York. "Is L.A. less edgy? Yeah," he says. "A comedian said, 'I used to hate L.A. Then one morning I woke up and something inside me had died.' Maybe that's happened to me."

At the moment, we're in Hollywood, en route to O'Brien's first solo apartment. O'Brien is driving a gray BMW, wearing

tortoiseshell sunglasses and a long-sleeve navy-blue shirt. He's a careful driver, keeping both hands on the wheel. He's also a nonstop talker. In the first years of *Late Night With Conan O'Brien*, he would occasionally cut off his guests, mid-anecdote, unable to resist injecting his own (admittedly, much funnier) joke.

O'Brien, noting how much cleaner Hollywood looks these days, launches into one of his long riffs. "I'm really good at living in a place eight years before it's safe and cool," he says. "In the Eighties, I lived in Williamsburg. That was when they just shot people in the head and took their underwear. They stole things from you that they didn't even need. 'I wanna take his underwear.' 'You have underwear.' 'I know.' *Blam*. So a friend of mine said, 'I have a space for you in my place in Williamsburg.' And I remember thinking, 'Ah, Colonial Williamsburg.' I actually had this image of cobblestones and gas lamps and people churning butter. But I was disabused of that notion really quickly. There was no hipster stuff at all yet. They have to parachute hipsters into an area 15 years ahead

things are getting better now. And here's the best thing. On the first floor, these two models lived there who were gorgeous. And I'm not even lying about this. I had the top floor, they had the bottom floor. And one day I'm in my apartment, and they're taking photos of each other in the backyard. And they have the silver reflectory thing, and they're wearing string bikinis and giggling. I'm not even making this up. It sounds like *Animal House* or something. And I just happened to look out the window and see them doing this, and suddenly I'm frozen like a deer. And they look up, and they see me looking down at them, and I'm so fucked. It's like I'm Boo Bradley. I'm the pervert on the second floor."

It's true: There are few ways to recover from that.

"No! I started shouting, 'I'm not masturbating! I'm really not masturbating!' Which, I've found, is never a good sentence."

Even if true, probably not the best thing to yell.

"First of all, it wasn't true. Second of all, yes, it's like Nixon's 'I am not a crook.'"

"I FELT LIKE I'D JUST BEEN IN A CAR ACCIDENT," SAYS O'BRIEN OF LOSING 'THE TONIGHT SHOW.' "A CRAZY MIX OF ELATION, ANGER, SORROW."

of time, and many of them die, but they lay the groundwork. And I think that's probably what happened in Brooklyn. There's a while where they're pouring hipsters in and it's like Gallipoli. It's just troops getting mowed down. Just battalions of guys wearing Buddy Holly glasses and bowling shoes getting chewed up. But then eventually they take over."

We turn onto a residential street lined with stucco apartment complexes and pull over. O'Brien leads me to the gated alley of one of the shabbier buildings, pointing out the window of his old room at the far end. "It was the kind of place," he says, "where when someone takes a shot at the president and the Secret Service jumps on him and finds his address and 20 minutes later they kick down his door—that's what my apartment looked like. 'What kind of sick mind...?' It had that kind of vibe. Criminologists would study it and say, 'We should've seen it—he was a powder keg!'" O'Brien lasted three years in L.A. during that first stint, and earned enough of a rep to get a job at *Saturday Night Live*. He would return in the early Nineties, when he was hired to work on *The Simpsons*.

When we drive past his *Simpsons*-era apartment in West Hollywood, it's clearly an upgrade. "It was the second floor of that place," he says, slowing down. "You can tell

O'Brien calls his publicist to let him know our whereabouts. "It's going terribly," O'Brien says. "I've been telling him about my racial theories."

"Oh, no," the publicist says.

"I will be proved right one day!" O'Brien shouts.

There's a famous magazine profile of Johnny Carson, which O'Brien loves, in which the writer Kenneth Tynan describes Carson as chatting at a cocktail party "with impersonal affability, making no effort to dominate, charm or amuse." Tynan goes on to quote an acquaintance of Carson's who says, "Socially, he doesn't exist. The reason is that there are no television cameras in living rooms. If human beings had little red lights in the middle of their foreheads, Carson would be the greatest conversationalist on Earth."

O'Brien is not like this. Onstage or off, he's always on, his mind racing several steps ahead of the conversational topic at hand to scout for possible bits. Which is not to say he's a self-absorbed monologist, like certain performers who grow used to dotting audiences hanging on their every word. In fact, he's unusually inquisitive for an interview subject, and clearly enjoys having a two-sided conversation. But the joking does have a compulsive, almost Tourette quality, as if the only way

for O'Brien to process the world around him is to incessantly, fanatically catalog its absurdities.

Another surprising detail about O'Brien: One of his closest friends happens to be a Catholic priest. "As much as I hate to give him credit, I think he is one of the few most uniquely funny people I know," says the Rev. Paul O'Brien, the pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in Lawrence, Massachusetts. O'Brien and O'Brien (no relation) lived in the same house at Harvard (along with future NBC president Jeff Zucker, who presided over O'Brien's ouster from *The Tonight Show* and was recently fired himself), reconnecting several years after graduation when they bumped into each other at midnight Mass one Christmas.

"He loves entertaining the five people he's just met," Rev. O'Brien continues. "When we've been on vacation together and he's relaxed and doesn't have to worry about whatever show he's on, it's actually amazing how much funnier he is." And how much of his comic sensibility is drawn from his Irish Catholicism? "Oh, everything," Rev. O'Brien says. "Everything about him. Whether we like it or not, that's what we've turned out to be. He has a dark humor that can be traced back to the Irish, and a respect for human beings where, while he may be lampooning them, he's not hurting them. And like most of us who are Irish, he has an infinite capacity for vengeance. The Irish-jihad potential is enormous! But if you channel it into something like comedy, it's very powerful."

"The negative side of being Irish is that a Jewish person might say, 'Oh, Conan, I knew him in high school, and now look how well he's done.' Whereas an Irish person might say, 'Yeah, I knew him when he was in a cold-water flat in Somerville. He was *nothing*.' That negativity gives you the strength of humility. You're not supposed to be the most important person in the world, and you don't ever think that you are." Rev. O'Brien laughs, and then says, "If his grossly misshapen head has ever become inflated, it wouldn't stay that way for long."

O'BRIEN'S OFFICE IS MODEST and, like his set, still almost entirely undecorated. There's a turntable, a couple of phones on the floor, nothing on the freshly painted walls. As O'Brien reinvents himself for the second time in as many years, his surroundings seem set-designed to reflect the blankness of the slate he's facing.

At the moment, Sona Movsesian, O'Brien's assistant, is seated at his desk, attempting to load some backstage photographs from his comedy tour onto his computer.

"I'm still waiting for it to identify the hard drive," she explains.

"Oh, you failed us," O'Brien says. Turning to me, he adds, "Sona's an Armenian immigrant."

"I was born here," she says.

"She came to this country weeks ago," O'Brien says. "It's not her fault. She learned to speak English by watching old episodes of *Dynasty*."



THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

After being ousted from *The Tonight Show*, O'Brien went on his Legally Prohibited From Being Funny on Television Tour.

"I was born in Montebello," she says.

"That's an island off Bulgaria," O'Brien says.

O'Brien's first months on *Late Night* were famously awkward. He was 30 years old, but looked like an intern wearing his only suit, and his caffeinated performance style came off as nervous and twitchy. "Conan's a wired-up guy, and unless a performer has a thousand-percent confidence, which he didn't at that point, you can't force his persona on the public," says the writer Robert Smigel, who worked with O'Brien on *SNL* and later became the first head writer at *Late Night*. Still, almost from the beginning, it was clear that O'Brien and his team were bringing a new, appealingly bent sensibility to the genre.

Smigel wanted the show to have more of a sketch-comedy energy, and he and O'Brien shared a love of musty show-business conventions, which they updated to surreal, hilarious effect. And so one of the most forward-looking comedy shows on television featured a profane hand puppet (Triumph the Insult Comic Dog), a tribute to the Sixties animated series *Clutch Cargo* (in which moving lips were superimposed onto still photographs of people like Bill Clinton, who, as voiced by Smigel, became a hooting hillbilly), recurring characters (the Masturbating Bear! The Coked-Up Werewolf! Tomorrow the Ostrich!) and a giant lever straight out of the era of live children's television (only in this case, pulling the lever triggered random clips from *Walker, Texas Ranger*). In the very first episode, O'Brien also passive-aggressively debuted "Actual Items," a much funnier parody of Leno's signature wacky-newspaper-headlines bit.

It's unclear if NBC will be fighting O'Brien for intellectual-property rights on certain bits and characters created on the old show. "If there's something we did for a long time that we've established as ours, we'll figure out a way to do it," O'Brien says. "I won't be denied my Masturbating Bear! What I really wanna do is be sued over the bear and then appear in court with the Masturbating Bear. 'Your Honor, this bear can't help himself!'"

O'Brien's humor is so relentlessly self-deprecating, it's easy to overlook the fact that he also has a serious ego. He comes from a family of over-achievers: the third of six children, father a prominent microbiologist, mother a prominent lawyer. Unlike, say, Letterman, whose comedy seems to come from a place of deep self-loathing, O'Brien acknowledges that underneath "layers of questioning, doubting, double-checking, worrying," he possesses a "solid adamantium core of confidence." He knows he's generally the funniest guy in the room.

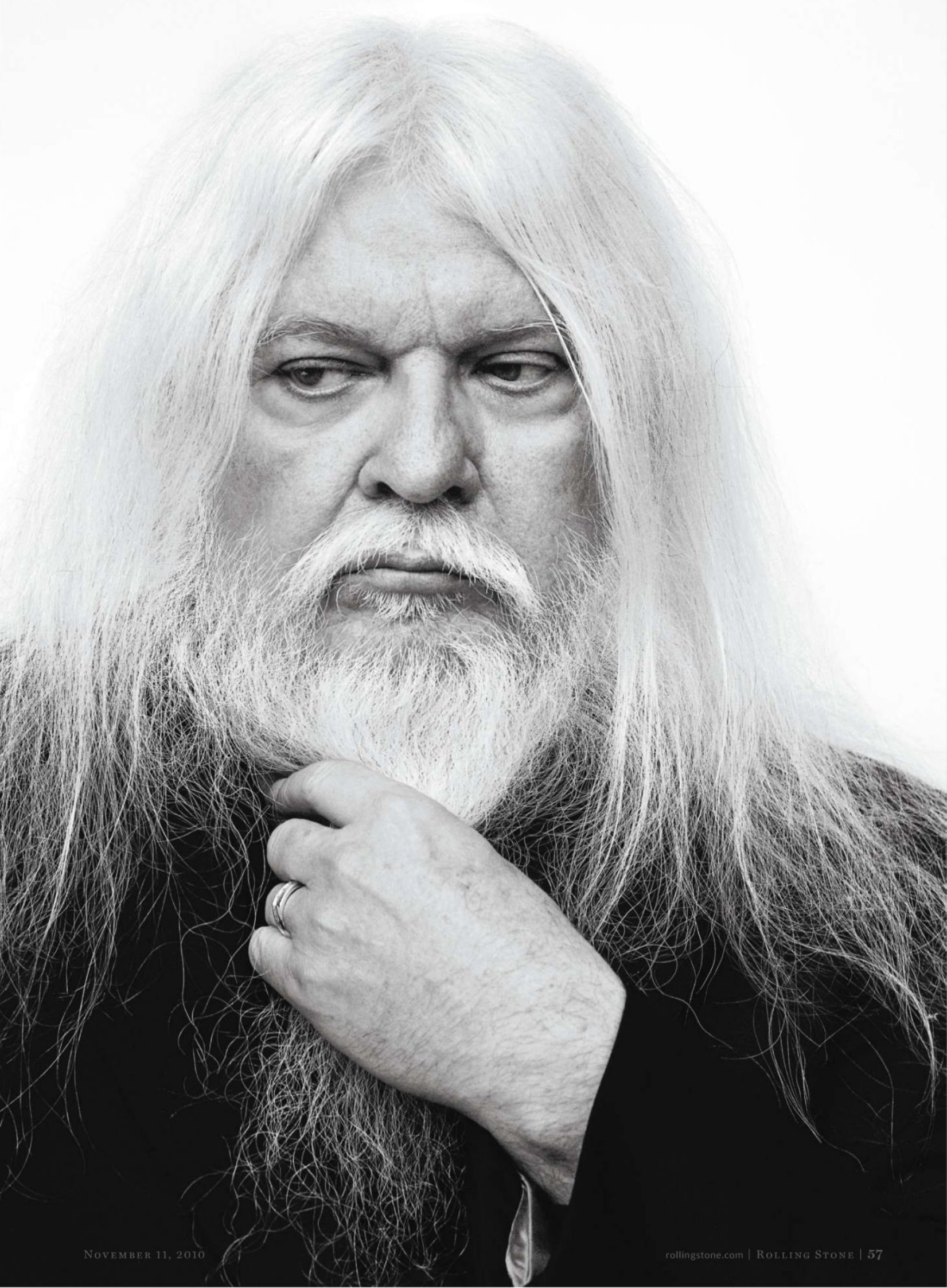
Which isn't to say that he lacks a work ethic (once described by O'Brien himself as "almost humorless") that borders on the obsessive. "I was very whatever adjective you come up with for the opposite of laid-back," acknowledges O'Brien. "My natural tendency is to overthink, often to my detriment." He has been in therapy for depression, and despite a tendency, in Smigel's words, to "never want the audience to feel like he's not their friend," a darker streak will occasionally emerge from that goofy, crowd-pleasing exterior. The cold opening of O'Brien's very [Cont. on 82]

The Master of Space & Time Returns

LEON RUSSELL IS DRIVING TO HIS HOME IN NASHVILLE, following an afternoon of recording new songs at a friend's studio, when he starts talking about Bob Dylan. Russell is describing a session on which he played bass "for that record about the boxer" – Dylan's 1975 single "Hurricane." ✎ "We did a take – just running it down, I thought," Russell says, navigating the rush-hour traffic in large black sunglasses surrounded by a snow-white mass of hair and beard. "I said, 'Are you going to do the real thing now?' Bob said, 'Why? We're just going to make the same mistakes.'" Russell laughs – a deep, dry rasp, like someone shaking a bag of gravel. ✎ It's like that all day, in the car, over lunch and at home in

Leon Russell was the forgotten man of Seventies rock – until Elton John pulled him back in the studio to make one more classic album
By David Fricke

Photograph by Mark Seliger



his living room – Russell casually telling stories that zigzag over his half-century of rock & roll adventure and star time as a songwriter, arranger and producer: doing sessions for Dylan, George Harrison and Frank Sinatra; singing backup on Ricky Nelson records and playing piano on Beach Boys and Phil Spector hits in the Sixties; writing songs that became standards for Joe Cocker (“Delta Lady”) and George Benson (“This Masquerade”); and cutting solo projects with Eric Clapton and members of the Rolling Stones as sidemen.

For a long spell, in the Sixties and Seventies, Russell seemed to be everywhere at once with a rambunctious fusion of country grit, big-band soul and Pentecostal-church ecstasy, making every singer and player around him sound sharp and funky. He first shot to fame in the credits on other people’s records, most notably as the leader of the mighty R&B orchestra on Cocker’s legendary 1970 *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* tour. On the subsequent live album, Russell appeared on the sleeve as a wiry ringmaster with a top hat and a long mane of silver-gray hair, billed as the “Master of Space and Time.” Russell was soon a big name in his own right, with a superstar-packed debut, 1970’s *Leon Rus-*

Russell describes himself and his gifts more modestly. “I was a jobber, like an air-conditioning installer,” he says over a steak sandwich in a Nashville restaurant, in the same rubbery, pitted drawl that distinguishes his improbably poignant singing. “You need air conditioning? You call this guy. People called me to do what I did.” Russell recalls that after he wrote the horn charts for “Live With Me” on the Stones’ 1969 album, *Let It Bleed*, “Mick Jagger said, ‘That sounds like ‘Harlem Shuffle’” – the 1963 R&B single by Bob and Earl. “I said, ‘I thought that’s what you guys did.’”

“I was playing with George Harrison one time, and George loves takes,” Russell says with a gruff chuckle. “This song was up to Take 160. I said, ‘George, do you want me to play the same thing or 160 different things?’ It drove me crazy, because in general, I’m ready to play my part.”

Many of Russell’s best stories are 30 and 40 years old. By the late Seventies, he was exhausted by studio deadlines and the road. “I quit for two years,” Russell says. But while he was gone, the stars moved on to other collaborators, and Russell’s brand of Americana went out of fashion, shoved aside by punk and hip-hop. When he came back, Russell was

I’ve also got this little tricycle, so if I want to go someplace, I get those out.” Married to his second wife, Janet, since 1979, Russell has six children and a house full of small, excitable dogs belonging to two of his daughters. A couple of times during our interview there, he gets up from his chair and shouts through a door at the dogs to calm down. “At one point, we had 16,” Russell says, shaking his head and laughing. “It drives me crazy.”

In January, shortly after he and John started work on *The Union*, Russell underwent brain surgery to correct a spinal-fluid leak. Three weeks later, he was in the studio with John and the album’s producer, T Bone Burnett. “You could see the music starting to wire him back up,” Burnett says of Russell. “Every day he got stronger and more involved.”

John worries about Russell’s health. “That’s one of the reasons I’m pinning my hopes on this record,” John admits. “I want him to be in a position where he can pick and choose what he does, where he doesn’t have to drive around on the bus and play so many shows.” Russell is now handled by John’s own manager, John Barbis.

That afternoon in Nashville, at the home studio of engineer Mark Lambert, Russell is writing material for the pop

“I was surprised by the success I had,” says Russell. “I was not surprised when it went away. I knew about show business.”

sell, and a Top Five hit, 1972’s *Carney*.

He disappeared as abruptly as he arrived: falling out of favor in the Eighties, making records in obscurity. That has changed just as suddenly. Russell has released one of his best albums, *The Union*, a collaboration with Elton John on which they recapture the roots and dynamics of their classic early-Seventies records.

“There are some people who are born to be leaders of musicians – and he is,” says John, who became an ardent Russell fan after hearing his gospel-charged piano on Delaney and Bonnie’s 1969 LP *Accept No Substitute*. John says that when he saw the 1971 film of the *Mad Dogs* tour, “It was Leon I was watching. He had the feel for that music. Joe was an amazing singer. But you could tell it was Leon’s band.”

“He was the straw boss of the outfit,” confirms Stones saxophonist Bobby Keys, who was one of the nearly two dozen members in the *Mad Dogs* band, pulled together by Russell in four days after Cocker’s previous group bailed on him on the eve of the tour. “Leon had very definite ideas about music and telling people what to play.”

playing in bars instead of arenas, as if his renown had suddenly evaporated.

“I haven’t gone there with him, but I think there were bad business deals,” John suggests. “If he’d had proper management, that never would have happened.” By the time John called Russell last year, insisting they record together, Russell had been without a major-label deal for nearly two decades and was selling his records over the Internet.

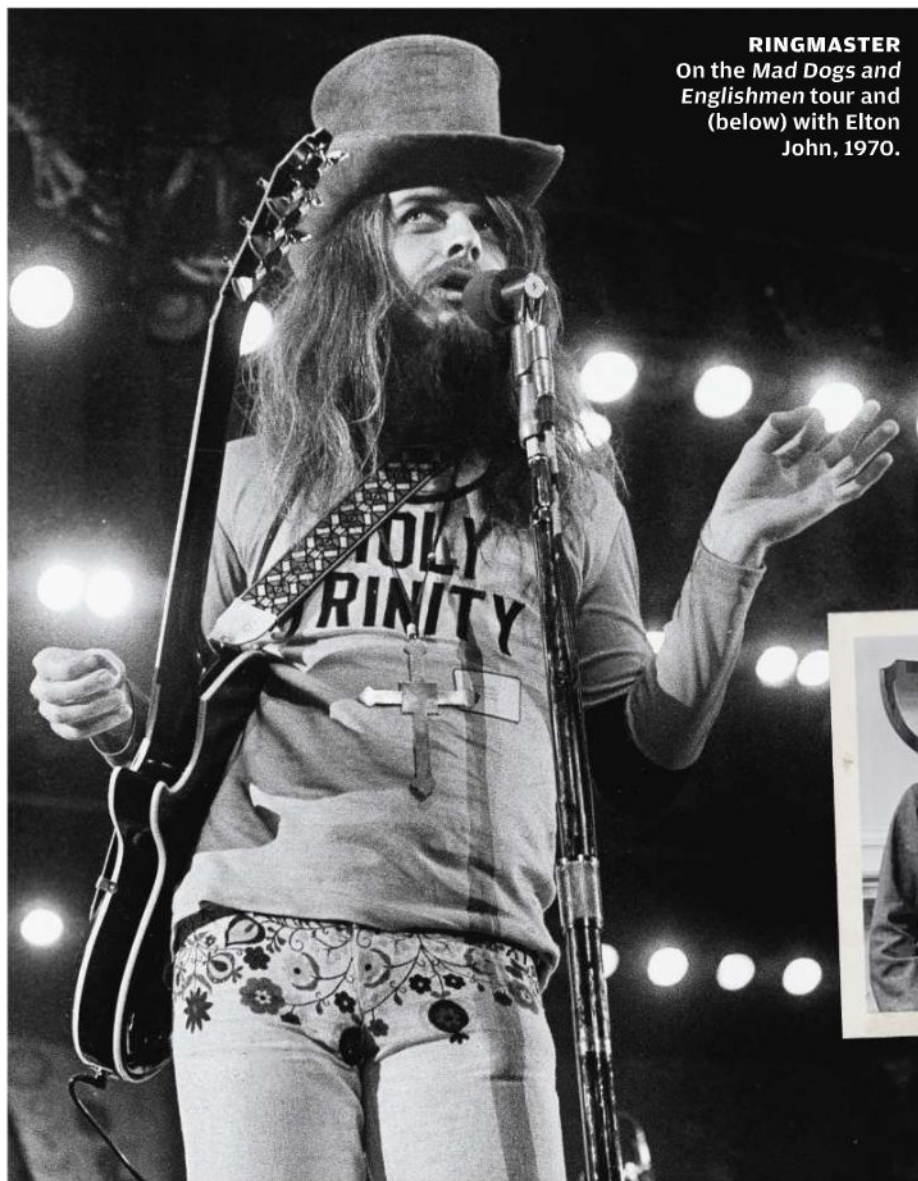
“I knew that about show business,” Russell says with a shrug. “I was surprised by the success that I had. I was not surprised when it went away.” Still, John claims he saw the old Russell – the one he first met in 1970, when the two did some U.S. concerts together – come alive during the sessions for *The Union*: “He came to the fore, because he was making a record of the caliber that he should have been all along.”

The lean hipster-Jesus look Russell had when he made the cover of *ROLLING STONE* in the fall of 1970 has given way to a portly figure with Santa Claus hair who walks slowly, with a cane. “My feet are giving out on me,” he says. “But I have a wheelchair that folds out on my tour bus.

singer Michael Bublé – “except he doesn’t know it yet,” Russell cracks. After listening to some Pro Tools demos from an earlier session, Russell turns his attention to an instrumental ballad with a Latin-inflected shuffle and barroom-piano flourishes. Lying almost horizontally on a lounge chair, Russell types lyrics on a PowerBook perched on his belly and sings into an overhead mic, in that trademark growl, stretching the notes with rough, soulful affection. When he finally gets a complete take, Russell smiles, pleased with the results.

“Actually, doing the album with Elton spoiled me,” he confesses as he gets ready to leave. “Now’s the time when I’d like to bring in \$100,000 worth of musicians to finish the song.”

L EON RUSSELL WAS BORN Claude Russell Bridges in Lawton, Oklahoma, on April 2nd, 1942, the younger of two sons. His father was a clerk for an oil company who moved the family to Tulsa when Russell was in the seventh grade. He was soon playing piano in nightclubs,



RINGMASTER
On the *Mad Dogs* and
Englishmen tour and
(below) with Elton
John, 1970.



often with a local friend, singer-guitarist J.J. Cale. "Oklahoma was a dry state," Russell says. "It didn't mean there wasn't any alcohol – it just meant there wasn't any laws, which allowed me to play at 14."

Russell believes his distinctive piano style – low-end blues power with high-note sparkle – is partly the result of a malformation at birth of the bones in his head. "It made me slightly paralyzed on one side of my body," he says, leaving his left hand stronger than the right. To compensate, when he started writing and arranging music, "I was trying to find stuff that my right hand could play." Russell notes that when he was doing sessions in Los Angeles, "writers hired me when they wanted classical parts. They counted on me to make the arrangements easier."

He became Leon Russell after moving to California. He was 17, borrowing IDs and musicians-union cards to get work, most often from a guy named Leonal Dubrow. Russell never legally changed his name. "It's handy," he admits. "I can be a different person for a while."

Guitarist James Burton was playing with Ricky Nelson when he met Russell,

shortly after the pianist's arrival in L.A. Burton introduced Russell to the session scene there, and the two worked together on records for artists such as Nelson, the Beach Boys, and Gary Lewis and the Playboys. "Leon would change things up," Burton recalls. "He put a bluesy touch on the country records we played on. He'd give something a different flavor, rather than sticking to the normal grind."

In 1969, Russell met Denny Cordell, a British producer-manager who wanted Russell to work with one of his acts, Joe Cocker. Russell and Cordell soon founded Shelter Records, with Russell doing much of his writing and recording at a studio in his Los Angeles home, on Skyhill Drive. "Leon would disappear down into the garage," Keys remembers. "He would go and contemplate things for periods of time. People thought that was a bit unusual."

"Leon was somewhat of a recluse," says singer Rita Coolidge, the inspiration for "Delta Lady," who sang on many Russell projects, including the *Mad Dogs* tour, and was Russell's girlfriend for a time. When the two drove cross-country in

1968, shortly after they met, Coolidge did all the driving, signed in at motels and got food. "Leon looked so different from anybody else, with the long white hair and beard," she recalls. "It threw people, and made him paranoid – especially in Texas." At the same time, Coolidge says, many of the images in Russell's songs, such as his 1972 Top 20 hit, "Tight Rope," "are about the spotlight, the circus, about him being the ringmaster. He has that Jerry Lee Lewis in him."

Russell concedes that even at the peak of his celebrity, he envied performers like John, "who could show up with a big pair of sunglasses with E-L-T-O-N spelled on them. He has no fear. I had huge stage fright." Russell's *Mad Dogs* threads – the top hat and the basketball jersey that said HOLY TRINITY on the front – came from a

used-clothing shop near Skyhill Drive. "I was just trying to make a show."

Coolidge remembers Russell showing up for the first *Mad Dogs* rehearsal in that get-up: "I had lived with him for a year and never seen that side of him. He got out of the car, strutted across the parking lot, and that was the persona that lasted through the tour. His way of overcoming stage fright was to be bigger than life."

In a way, after his stardom passed, Russell went back to the way he was before it came: a working musician. "I was on the road with Jerry Lee Lewis when I was 15 – I can't imagine not doing it," he says of touring. "That's what I do." But there is a new baby grand piano in Russell's Nashville house – a gift from John, who hopes *The Union* is a fresh start for his idol. "I want him to have wings," John says. "I want him to make his own record. I also want him to be part of what I do in the future. He's come back to life. And I don't think he's going to let it go this time."

"It's a funny thing about fame and music," Russell says, relaxing in his living room after that demo session. "People have to have somebody like Elton that says it's OK. And when he does, suddenly it's OK!"

"I'm so grateful to Elton for saying I was OK. Because it could have been anybody." **2**



PHOE

MARS ATTACKS
Phoenix singer Thomas Mars crowd-surfs at Madison Square Garden in October.

NIXMANIA



HOW FOUR
FRENCH BOYS
MADE THEIR
GREATEST
ALBUM,
CONQUERED
AMERICA &
ROCKED
MADISON
SQUARE
GARDEN
BY JONAH
WEINER

THOMAS MARS KICKED A FAN ONCE, BUT THE GUY totally had it coming. Phoenix were playing a concert in Australia last year when the singer leapt into the audience, capping off the performance, as he often does, with a stage dive. “There was this one guy, a surfer dude, and he was grabbing at my shoe, trying to steal it,” Mars recalls. He writhed and flailed, but the Aussie wouldn’t quit. Finally, Mars lost his patience and – *bam!* He isn’t sure where his boot landed, but it was a hard kick, and the guy let go in a hurry. “I felt terrible,” Mars says. “We’re a very well-behaved band.” ¶ It’s evening in upstate New York, and Mars, 33, is in Phoenix’s dressing room at Cornell University, where the French band is about to face a sold-out crowd of 5,000 in an airplane-hangar-turned-

concert-hall. Mars’ tale of violent boot-justice Down Under is surprising because, as he says, everything about Phoenix seems well-behaved. There’s hardly a hint of unruliness in either their physical presence – they’re artfully scruffy and so skinny they almost look 2-D in profile – or their music, which is overridingly uptempo and restrained, from its watchmaker-precise songwriting to Mars’ clean, boyish phrasing. Their breakthrough 2009 album, *Wolfgang Amadeus Phoenix*, runs an emotional spectrum that starts at wistful and stops a few clicks later at bitter-sweet. “No matter if we’re sad or happy or whatever, the music doesn’t depend on the state we’re in when we write it,” Mars says. “There’s something distant about it.” He calls the ideal recording studio a “*chambre froide*” – a walk-in freezer.

A decade ago, Phoenix – Mars, bassist Deck D’Arcy, 34, and guitarists Laurent Brancowitz, 36, and Christian Mazzalai, 34 – were four friends from Versailles trying to make a name on the Paris alternative-music scene. Three days from now, they’ll play Madison Square Garden, crowning a touring cycle that’s barely stopped since *Saturday Night Live* in April of last year, their first appearance in the mainstream American consciousness. The band’s tendency toward austerity makes Phoenix unlikely candidates for rock stardom, but rock stars are – improbably and almost sneakily – what they’ve become.

Tonight’s gig is a warm-up for MSG, as the band prepares to answer one of the biggest questions it has faced: What the hell are four French boys who shun outsize gestures going to do on the planet’s most famous stage? The question is double-edged. They want to blow the place away, but not at the expense of their cool. “We’ve always been afraid of bands we love getting bigger,” Mazzalai says. “We’ve had to think of how to play Madison Square Garden in a convincing way.” “Not something with fireworks, big lights, that kind of cliché,” Brancowitz adds, scoffing.

JONAH WEINER profiled Mark Ronson in *RS 1111*. He lives in Brooklyn.

Right now, they’re focusing on the task at hand, which in Mars’ case means thieft-proofing his footwear. He’s hunched over in a folding chair, wrapping gaffer’s tape around his ankles – binding his weathered desert boots, made by the French brand Sartore, to his legs. He’s taken to doing this before every show. He invites me to test his handiwork, so I grab hold of his right boot and start tugging. Mars smiles. I yank harder, whipping his leg around – his chair skids across the floor, but the boot doesn’t budge. “Try all you want,” Mars says. “It’s not coming off.”

UNLESS YOU WERE THE KIND OF kid who loved 17th-century landscaping and the constant company of tourists, Versailles wasn’t a very exciting place to grow up. For Phoenix, the city wasn’t so much a cultural vacuum as a cultural tomb. In Mars’ adolescence, though, thanks to a lone neighborhood record store and a cable feed of MTV’s *120 Minutes*, he decided to be a musician and formed a two-man band with D’Arcy: Mars on a snare drum, D’Arcy on keyboard, bashing out Joy Division-ish tunes. “I wanted to be dark, but I don’t know if deep inside I was dark,” Mars says. He describes playing music in Versailles as “a release. It was a very strict, Catholic city. It was like we were making noise in a museum.”

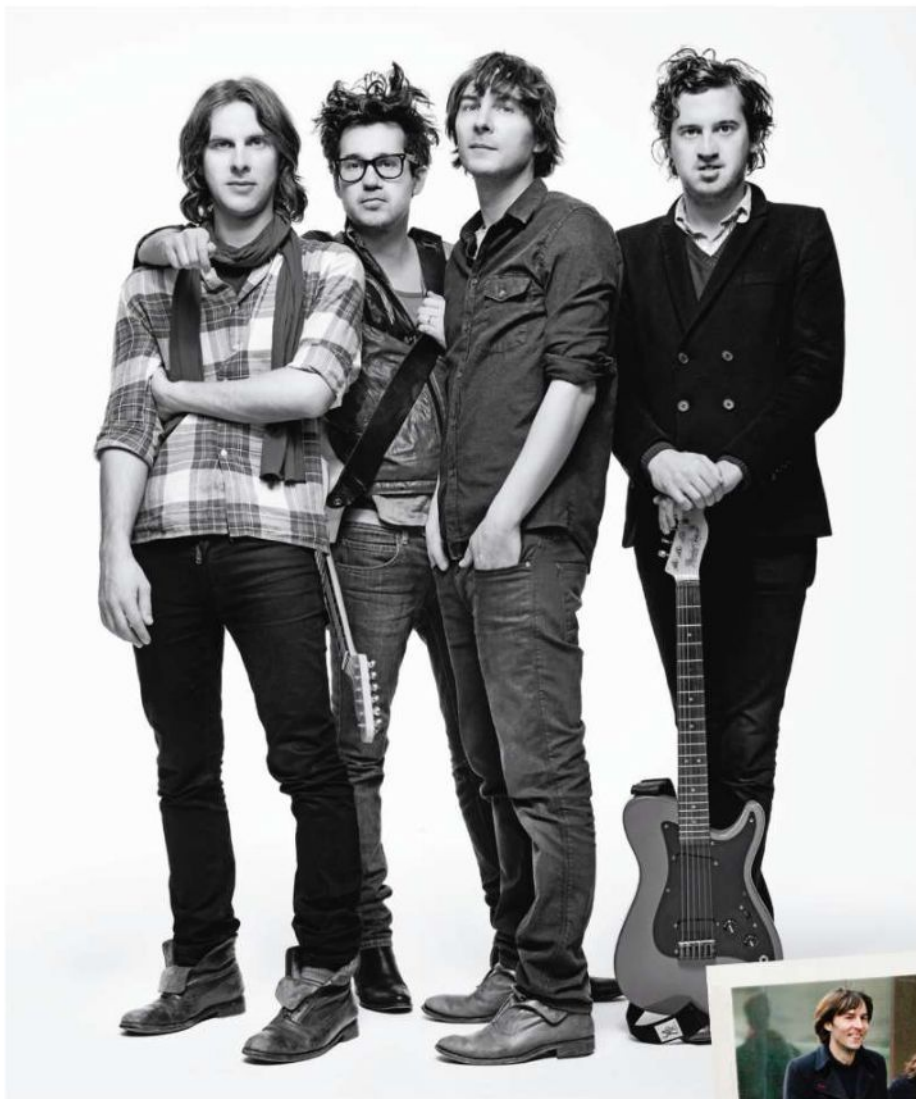
Mars’ parents were businesspeople, since retired to France’s southeast, where

they own a vineyard. The only job the members of the band ever wanted was to be members of a band, but as teenagers, Mazzalai sold ice cream to tourists, Brancowitz worked at a fast-food joint, and Mars and D’Arcy were bartenders. Today, they can seem like different parts of the same brain: finishing each other’s sentences, translating unfamiliar English for each other, chuckling about private jokes (after concerts, they assign “Zagat ratings” to their performances). Spend some time with them and faint shadings in personality emerge: Mars is the most immediately outgoing, or perhaps just the most fluent in English. D’Arcy is the most reserved. Brancowitz is, in a group of well-dressed men, the dandy. Mazzalai is the most animated and, by the band’s standards, talkative.

The story of Phoenix’s career – which began in earnest in 2000 with the release of their debut album, *United* – is of a band homing in closer and closer on a sound. Inspired by their friends in Air and Daft Punk (Brancowitz was in a band called Darlin’ with the guys from the latter), Phoenix started off mining the then-déclassé stylings of cheeseball disco, pop metal and Seventies soft rock. *United* is an uneven juggling act, full of cock-rock riffs, Bee Gees grooves and comically smooth sax solos. “It was, like, a punk-rock thing for us to use a saxophonist, because it was totally forbidden,” Mazzalai says. Over the next three albums, however, their sound grew less louche and slinky and more lightweight and propulsive. *Wolfgang*, full of little interlocking parts and big, laser-cut hooks, is the culmination of that arc. “We trimmed the fat,” Brancowitz says. The album has sold half a million copies, and it won the Best Alternative Album Grammy. (Their plan after the current tour is to begin album five, but they won’t discuss it: “If we say an idea out loud, it dies,” Mazzalai intones gravely.)

Part of the reason for Phoenix’s breakthrough success is that they wrote the two best songs of their career – “Lisztomania” and “1901.” Part of it is that they signed with an independent label, Glassnote, that paid them closer attention (and lent them more business-side muscle) than their previous label, EMI, had. And part of it is that the band made its peace with selling out. Phoenix licensed “1901” for use in a Cadillac commercial, and “Lisztomania” figured prominently in a trailer for the rom-com *Valentine’s Day* and in an *Entourage* season finale. “We said ‘no’ to everything forever,” Brancowitz recalls. They’d turned down L’Oréal and Dannon endorsements and scrutinized movie scripts before allowing songs on soundtracks. (Mars’ girlfriend, Sofia Coppola, whom he doesn’t like to talk about except to say that their meet-cute was playing an *Asteroids* arcade game in her brother Roman’s backyard bar, has used Phoenix songs in several movies, and the band scored her forth-

**“I’M NOT THE
‘FRONTMAN,’” SAYS
MARS. “ONSTAGE,
WE ARE FOUR IN A
LINE, NEVER ONE IN
THE MIDDLE.”**



PHOENIX RISING

Top: D'Arcy, Brancowitz, Mars and Mazzalai (from left).
Right: Mars, girlfriend Sofia Coppola and daughter Romy in Paris.

coming *Somewhere*.) Explaining the loosening of their licensing policy, Brancowitz says something hard to follow about "the poetic beauty of being part of the texture, the fabric of time." Mazzalai says that the band grew interested in the idea that its songs "don't belong to us."

Still, the band's relationship to fame is ambivalent. "I try to do everything I can so that I'm not the 'frontman,'" Mars says. "Onstage, we are four in a line, never one in the middle." For a while, Phoenix had no singer, because no one wanted the job. They insist on dressing the same way onstage as they do on the street – to this end, a Parisian tailor made Mars "about 60" versions of a blue button-down he liked. "And I almost always wear the original," he adds.

Of course, this is its own sort of anti-pose. When Phoenix play MSG, they hit the stage with a careening, swaggering force their records only hint at, matching their OCD precision with surprising brawn. (Daft Punk make an unannounced appearance, jamming with the band on an extended, set-closing "1901.") Live, Mars

is magnetic, even as he folds his body inward and brushes at his hair self-consciously – and as his crowd-surfing habit attests, he's not above busting out classic frontman tricks to stir up an audience. But for him, it's a methodically thought-out ritual, from the gaffer's tape to the timing: He likes to dive at the end of his sets, then return to the stage and smash his mic into the floor. Even this serves a practical purpose. "It's a signal, like, 'This is the end,'" he says. "There's nothing more embarrassing than being backstage and people want more and you don't have more."

ON A CHILLY AFTERNOON TWO weeks before the MSG show, Mars is sitting on a patio at the Bowery Hotel in downtown Manhattan, drinking a Peroni. For the past few years, Mars has shared an apartment nearby with Coppola and their two daughters,

Romy, 3, and Cosima, born in June. (Brancowitz, Mazzalai and D'Arcy live in Paris.) "I love Manhattan," Mars says. "Even midtown I find exciting. I imagine I'm in a scene from *Tootsie*." When it came time to work on *Wolfgang Amadeus Phoenix*, the band holed up in various locales – a houseboat on the Seine, a rented Paris flat, a palatial suite here at the hotel. "We got a big room with a terrace where we could make some noise," Mars says.

We're joined by a friend of Mars', a music-video cinematographer named Francisco Soriano. The two scrounge together cash for cigarettes – "I've got \$11," says Soriano; "I've got \$3," says Mars – and have a smoke. Soriano shot the clip for "Lisztomania" and, recently, worked on Kanye West's short film, *Runaway*.

"I heard Kanye screened it in Paris," Mars says. "My friend told me Kanye came out, gave a little talk and cried."

"I could see that," Soriano says.

"Kanye interned at Louis Vuitton," Mars says. "Sofia was designing a bag for them, and was like, 'How's it going?' And the guy was like, 'Ugh, Kanye's here. He's an intern, but we have to give him VIP treatment.' He was slowing down the creative process, because he would ask, 'How do you make this? What material is this logo?'"

Hip-hop on the brain, Mars mentions

the time Jay-Z, Beyoncé and her sister Solange watched Phoenix's set at Coachella. "We're about to go on, and suddenly these black Escalades pull into the artists' area, and they get out," Mars recalls. "I looked down and Solange was singing along. I was so stunned, I messed up the next three lines."

Telling these anecdotes, Mars' demeanor is wide-eyed, but also a bit sidelong, like he's discussing members of a club he respects but isn't much interested in joining. This is clearest when he brings up a story that the Strokes' Fabrizio

Moretti and Kings of Leon's Caleb

Followill told him about how, on tour years ago, they met a legendary drummer, who eagerly offered them cocaine. "Like, 'This is what you do, boys – play a show and do coke,'" says Mars, who doesn't do drugs and barely drinks. "It's the rock & roll life!"

While we're talking, a pretty girl comes over to our table. She works in textiles and knows Soriano from around town. Mars asks her to name the best place for fabric in the garment district. She mentions a store "where you can buy monkey fur." Then, realizing who I am, she apologizes and asks Mars if he's done with his interview.

"Yes," he says, stubbing out his cigarette and standing up. "I'm going to the bathroom to do some cocaine now." **2**





14,000 AND COUNTING
Garry Trudeau in his
Manhattan studio. "I'm
never happier than when
I'm not working," he says.

Doonesbury Turns 40

Garry Trudeau reflects on his days at Yale, his Pulitzer Prize-winning comic, and how he envisions it ending *By Chip Kidd*

PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIAN DUFORT

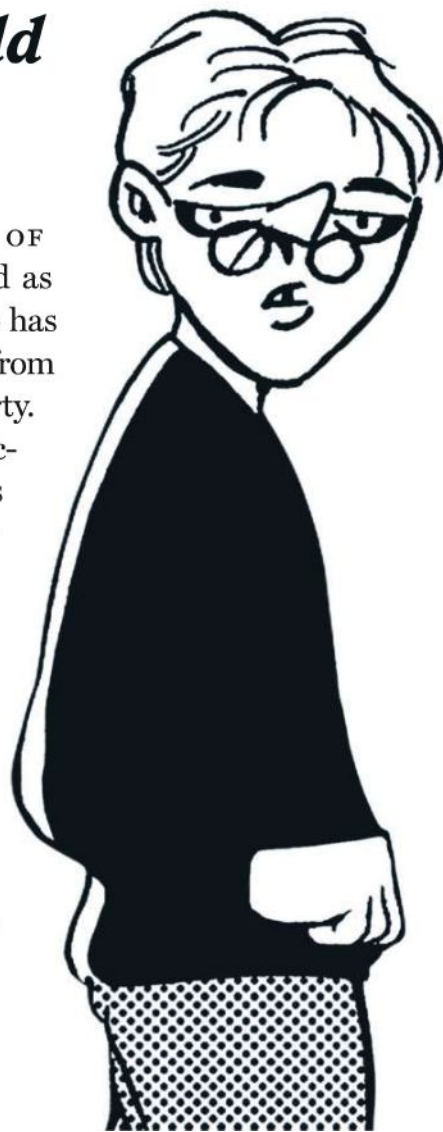
THIS OCTOBER MARKED THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF *Doonesbury*, the comic strip that Garry Trudeau started as an undergrad at Yale. Over the past four decades, the strip has chronicled virtually every major political and cultural shift, from Vietnam and Watergate to Afghanistan and the Tea Party. When viewed as a single, uninterrupted work of historical fiction, the collected *Doonesbury* reads less like 14,000-plus reasons to chuckle over your morning coffee and more like this era's *War and Peace*. Trudeau achieves this the same way Tolstoy did: by methodically constructing a large cast of complex and intriguing characters

whom the reader comes to care about, then letting the great tsunami of current events envelop them all. The cumulative result is as affecting and richly felt as any narrative produced by an artist of Trudeau's generation.

Two new books released this month commemorate the milestone. *40: A Doonesbury Retrospective* includes 1,800 strips that encompass most of the major story arcs of the series, from Zonker's early pothead days to the budding romance between Mike Doonesbury's daughter and a wounded young Iraq vet named Toggle. And *Doonesbury and the Art*

of G.B. Trudeau provides a rare glimpse of the artist's original drawings and sketches, as well as the numerous projects that have spun off from the strip.

On a recent morning, Trudeau sat down in his studio in midtown Manhattan to discuss everything from his student days at Yale to the challenges of tackling Obama. "What's wonderful about a comic strip is the stories unfurl in such a tiny, incremental way that you can keep a story alive for weeks," he says. "If I were writing a piece for a newspaper or



magazine, it would be a one-off – people might read it that day and then move on. So I can insinuate some of these issues under the skin of the body politic in a way that is not possible for people working in other media.”

You grew up in upstate New York and attended Yale at the height of the Vietnam War. What were you like as a kid?

Because I was a diminutive, arty kid, I felt like a misfit in high school – but who doesn’t? Then, in college during the Sixties, it was a time of great change and upheaval. There was so much going on, the academic piece seemed beside the point. It wasn’t, of course, but it felt that way. So for grad school, I deliberately chose a place where I would get a kind of structured discipline and formal training, which I felt I sorely needed.

Did you wind up getting it?

One of my first teachers at Yale was Richard Lytle. I waltzed into his drawing class with the bravado of a freshman art jock who thought he was going to make an impression on his professor, and I did.

goal was to be a graphic designer. After I graduated, I opened a design studio near the Yale campus. It was a going concern for about three years, but by then the strip had gained some real momentum. I finally had to make a decision about whether I was going to be a designer or a cartoonist. It was the middle of Watergate.

So the decision was made.

The decision was making itself with every passing day.

Do you regret not pursuing your dream to be a graphic designer?

One of the reasons I stepped away from design was I didn’t think I could get there. The first time I heard the Beatles, I thought, “That’s going to inspire 10,000 bands, and it’s going to cause another 10,000 bands to leave the business immediately.” They would just be overwhelmed at what it sounds like to get it right, note-perfect, every song.

Charles Schulz used to speak as if the characters in “Peanuts” were the ones writing the strip, as opposed to him. He’d be asked, “Is Charlie Brown’s baseball team ever going to win a game?” and he would

Superman, and then the revelation of what Stan Lee was doing at Marvel took over, and I fell into that rabbit hole with Spider-Man and his peers. But a very heavy influence was a serial in the Sixties called *Phoebe Zeitgeist*. It was written by Michael O’Donoghue, who later became the head writer of *Saturday Night Live*, and it was illustrated by Frank Springer. It was an absolutely brilliant, deadpan sendup of adventure comics, but with a very edgy modernist kind of approach. To this day, I hold virtually every panel in my brain. It’s very hard not to steal from it.

You’ve made a point of having your original characters grow and change over time. Which ones were the hardest for you to evolve and bring into the present?

I’m not sure degree of difficulty really enters into it. Fictional characters obviously can’t act independently of their creators, so how or even whether they evolve is simply a matter of artistic choice. Of course, in real life, some people learn more from the journey than others, and I hope the strip reflects that. Zonker is stuck in adolescence, but that’s because it’s fun

“I no longer advise anyone to get into comic strips. If I were graduating today, I’d be standing with my portfolio outside of Pixar.”

I whipped off the usual kind of drawings I was accustomed to making, somewhat effortlessly. One day, after about three weeks of this nonsense, we were working from a model, and he came over to my drawing board and ripped the drawing I was working on into pieces in front of the class. “Yes, yes, I know you can draw,” he said. “But what I want to find out is if you can *see*.” He wasn’t going to put up with this sort of facile art-student sketching that I had taken such pride in – he wanted me to do the hard work of actually looking at what I was drawing.

How did you react to that?

It was humiliating, but it certainly got my attention. Thereafter I took a long time looking at what I was preparing to render and to break down my attack. I tried to understand how I was going to convey something worth conveying, not just pretty little outlines.

How did “Doonesbury” come about?

I started the strip as a junior. I had no expectation that it would continue. My

say, “I don’t know,” as if the characters were in control.

Certainly, I relate to “I don’t know.” I haven’t a clue where my characters are going. Now it’s not that I feel they lead me – obviously, my imagination is what leads me, and often it will lead me in tiny little increments. Occasionally, it will jump ahead and I’ll have to reverse-engineer it. I’ll say, “Oh, yeah, this is where they’ve got to go,” and I’ve got to figure out how to get them there. Usually I’m moving forward at such a snail’s pace that there’s not much thinking far ahead, because there’s no time. Sparky worked, what, three months ahead? He was, like, a full season ahead, so in the summer, he’d be writing Thanksgiving stuff. That was his comfort zone, to be that far ahead. I think he just felt more comfortable knowing that if catastrophe struck, he had a real cushion.

Were you friends with him?

We were acquaintances. I think he was a bit skeptical from the very beginning about what I was doing, whether the kind of work I was doing belonged on the comics page.

What were your favorite comic books growing up?

All the superheroes. I started, as most kids in the Fifties did, with Batman and

to have his sustained innocence in the mix. Certainly, I know plenty of recovered hippies and could have made him one of them. On the other hand, I literally blasted B.D. out of his life of settled complacency. Exposed to sudden, brutal loss, B.D. became vulnerable in a way that was unfamiliar and frightening to him. He had to change to survive, to rebuild his resilience and create a new normal for himself.

None of this is planned, by the way. I just try to get through the week. There really isn’t any time to worry about how well everyone is aging.

After 40 years, you have so many different characters. Do they live within you? Do you wake up and Joanie says, “Hey, it’s time to pay attention to me?”

No. I don’t live with them at all. I’m never happier than when I’m not working. The strip is a job – that’s why I take money for it. It’s a job I’m passionate about, but it’s a job I totally leave in the studio when I walk out of here, unless I’m late and I have to work at home. I never think of the strip unless I’m compelled to.

On occasion, as I’m thinking about my characters, I do feel that one of them has been underserved, and that their story line needs to be developed further in some

CHIP KIDD, one of America’s leading graphic designers, is the co-author of “True Prep.” He designed the covers of *RS* 1094 and our 40th-anniversary issues.

way. If I start with a topic, then I will cast it. If I start with "Oh, I want to write about the Tea Party. How can I find an interesting way into that?" I'll choose the least likely character, which is Sam, Boopsie and B.D.'s daughter, who has a Sarah Palin action figure. While Sam sleeps, the action figure has little tea parties with the other toys. That came to me as I was watching *Toy Story 3*.

Is that the kind of training in conceptual thinking you got at Yale?

[Laughs] I do tend to break things down into a set of problems, but I think any artist does that – they create problems that they then set out to solve. Perhaps I became less chaotic as a cartoonist as a result of that training, less anarchic. I didn't want to get rid of it altogether, though, because that was part of the fun of the strip. It came out of nowhere, and it dealt with material that had never been on the comics page in such an overt fashion. *Little Orphan Annie* and *Pogo* and *Lil' Abner* had certainly brought political themes to the comics page, but I was the first to play around with the idea of moving beyond allegory and just having politics be part of the everyday lives of the characters, as they were of my peer group. My cohort in the early Seventies was primarily interested in sex, drugs and rock & roll, and politics. When you're young, you don't feel iconoclastic – you're just kind of doing what seems natural, what moves you.

And filling a void that you felt.

That turned out to be true from a marketing sense. When John McMeel, my boss, who was then selling the strip, went out into the marketplace, the way he framed it was: Yes, it's crude. Yes, it's not what you'd expect to see in a comic strip. But these are scribbles, dispatches, from the front lines of a generation that you care about – that you, the newspaper editors, care about, because you're trying to reach them. This is somebody who is, at least generationally, on the bus, this is somebody who is, in fact, living this right now. So these reports have a certain authenticity. I certainly never pretended to be a spokesman for a generation. But my journey, to some extent, reflected that of my generational cohort.

What about now? What motivates you to keep doing it after so many years?

In the beginning, I was floundering. I wasn't quite sure what the strip was meant to be. It revealed itself to me over time – the strip is an eyewitness to a generation as it comes of age and as it defines itself. That is so inherently interesting, no matter what generation it is, that now, 40 years later, I have 73 or 75 characters, because I'm also trying to pay attention to the subsequent generations and how they all interact. As the times demanded, I created new characters to reflect them.

The Key Cast

A few of the central characters, old and new, who populate the ever-expanding world of 'Doonesbury'

Mike Doonesbury



The strip's clueless but decent Everyman, Mike is named for a "doone," slang from Trudeau's prep-school days for a doofus-y nice guy. Mike keeps the strip

grounded: "He's utterly predictable," says Trudeau. "We know how he's going to respond to almost anything that happens."

B.D.



No character has evolved more over the years: B.D. started out as Mike's college roommate, a jock who never removed his helmet, and ended up losing a

leg in Iraq, bareheaded and broken. "He had to change to survive," says Trudeau. Graced the cover of RS 954, minus his leg.

Zonker Harris



The freewheeling, pot-loving, sun-worshipping embodiment of the Sixties, Zonker was named after one of Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters. Has never held a job much

higher than baby sitter. "Zonker is stuck in adolescence," says Trudeau. "It's fun to have his sustained innocence in the mix."

Uncle Duke



The only character created as "straight-ahead parody," Duke drew the fury of Hunter S. Thompson, who vowed to rip out Trudeau's lungs for ripping off his

likeness. Trudeau keeps the character in chaos: "Duke at rest is not just implausible – he's no fun." Made the cover of RS 194.

Alex Doonesbury



After four decades, the tale has come full circle: Mike's daughter is now a recent college graduate finding her way in the world. "She has become the animating

force in the strip, way beyond what her father is," Trudeau says. "She's still in the act of becoming, she's still evolving."

TRUDEAU'S PICKS



The artist discusses a few of his favorite strips at rollingstone.com.

Many of the original characters who started off as kids now have kids of their own.

In 1983, I moved the characters out of this time warp they'd all been in and moved them into real time, so that they started to age. They would intermarry and have children, so it became necessary to think about what the subsequent generations were going to be like and what the forces were that were molding them. Alex Doonesbury, Mike's daughter, has actually become the animating force in the strip now, way beyond what her father is. When I go to him, I go to him as the Everyman. He's utterly predictable; we know basically how he's going to respond to almost anything that happens. His daughter is still in the act of becoming, she's still evolving.

How old is she now?

She was born – in the strip – in 1987, so she's 23, and she's a grad student now.

In terms of research, is there somebody you turn to to find out what's on a 23-year-old's mind today?

I occasionally check in with my three kids, but mostly I just try to pay attention to them, to their friends, to younger colleagues. I don't expect other people to do the anthropology for me. I just try to stay alert to the world, to read widely. That actually constitutes about 80 percent of what I do, simply front-loading. Now that my kids are gone, it's a lot easier for me to get out into the world. They moved off to college just as I got involved with the issue of wounded warriors, which required a lot of travel and research. That wouldn't have been possible when they were still at home. So I've gone back out into the world in a way I haven't been able to since the Seventies.

What drew you to the issue of wounded soldiers?

What primed me for it was the first Gulf War. A commander of a tank brigade, Col. Bill Nash, invited me over to Kuwait and took me on a tour of a battlefield that was still smoldering. He said, "Here's the deal: You can go out to all the places where we saw action, you can have the run of the camp, you can play with our toys, you can go check out the Humvees and the M1A tanks and drive them if you want, get a feel for the physical culture. But then I want you to go talk to my guys – that's the deal."

That was a fabulous deal. Because Desert Shield had lasted so long – and they'd been stuck in the desert for something like six months before the war began – the troops didn't have much to do other than stay fit and hydrated. They had a lot of downtime, and they read *Stars and Stripes*, which was one of my first clients, so they were familiar with all the strips I'd been writing about the war. They had a lot to say to me, both good and bad. [Cont. on 84]

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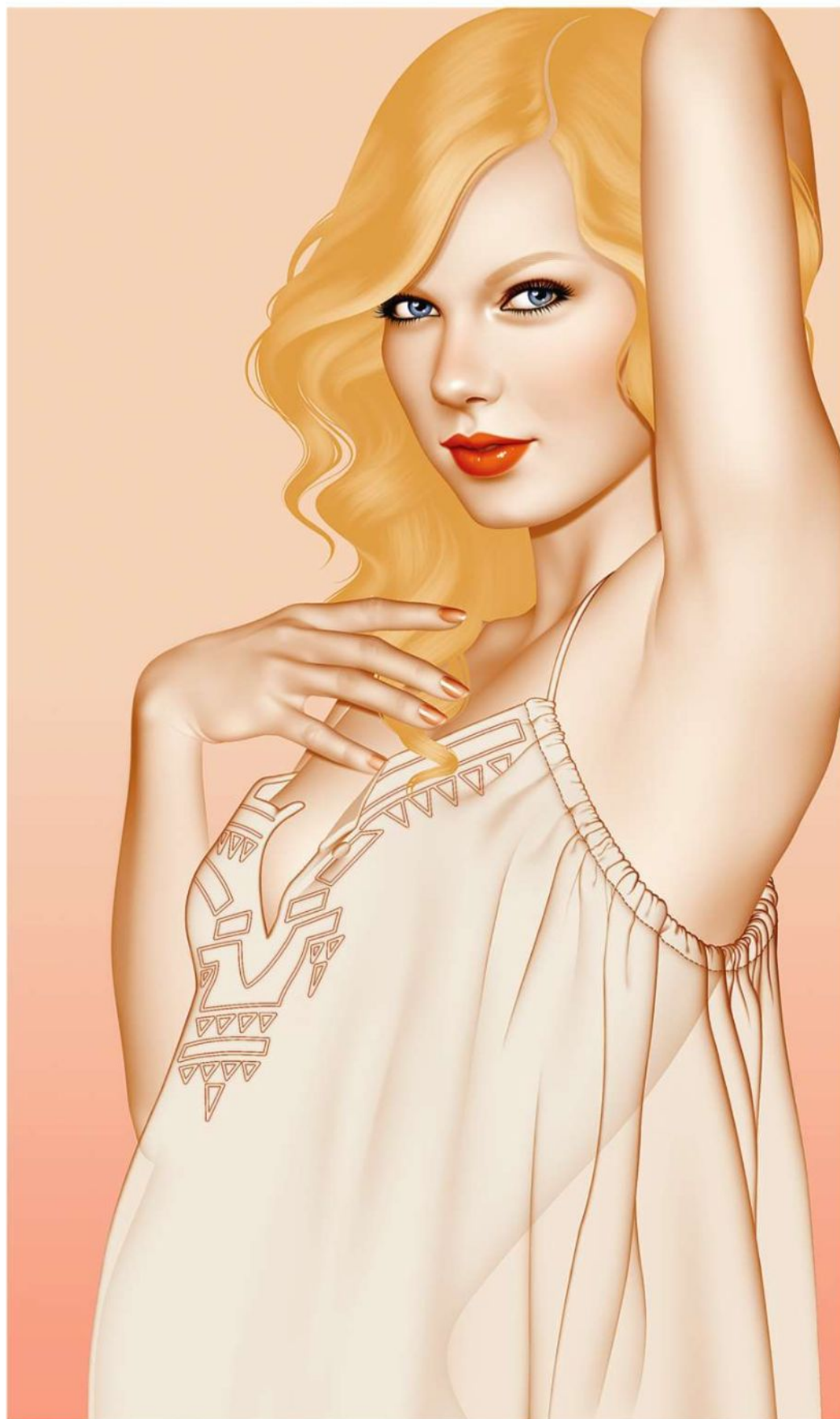
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Reviews

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America's sweetheart edges toward adulthood on her best disc yet

Taylor Swift

★★★★★

Speak Now *Big Machine*

BY ROB SHEFFIELD



People like to fixate on Taylor Swift's youth, as if to say, yeah, she's pretty good for her age. But that just begs a question: Where are all the older people who are supposedly making better pop records than Taylor Swift? There aren't any. In a mere four years, the 20-year-old Nashville firecracker has put her name on three dozen or so of the smartest songs released by anyone in pop, rock or country.

Swift's third album, *Speak Now*, is roughly twice as good as 2008's *Fearless*, which was roughly twice as good as her 2006 debut. These 14 tunes chronicle the hopes and dreams of boy-crazy small-town Everygirls, and Swift wrote them all by herself. (She also co-produced *Speak Now* with Nathan Chapman, who oversaw Swift's first two albums.) Swift might be a clever Nashville pro who knows all the hitmaking tricks, but she's also a high-strung, hyper-romantic gal with a melodramatic streak the size of the Atchafalaya Swamp. So she's in a class by herself when it comes to turning all that romantic turmoil into great songs. At this point, she's like the new Morrissey, except with even more eyeliner.

Swift takes a step into adulthood with *Speak Now* – she clearly aspires to the divorced-mom market where country stars do most of their business, slipping more grown-up details

into her love stories. It's tame by country-radio standards, but it's still weird to hear T-Sweezy sing lines like "There's a drawer of my things at your place." Sometimes you can even tell what chick flicks Swift has been watching from the song titles: "Dear John," "The Story of Us," "Enchanted."

In uptempo tunes like "Mine" and "Sparks Fly," or ballads like "Back to December" and "Enchanted," Swift's voice is unaffected enough to mask how masterful she has become as a singer; she lowers her voice for the payoff lines in the classic mode of a shy girl trying to talk tough. Check the way she tosses off the "You made a rebel of a careless man's careful daughter" part in "Mine." Anyone else would have built the whole song around that, yet for Swift it's just another brilliant throw-away detail. There's a minimum of country schmaltz on *Speak Now* – Swift likes her tempos fast and her choruses rock-size. In "Enchanted," she even cops the Prince trick of duetting with her own filtered voice.

As for the boys she tangles with on *Speak Now*, they're her usual type. "You're an expert at sorry/And keeping lines blurry/And never impressed/By me acing your tests" – get used to that guy, Taylor, you'll be meeting a lot of him. Her advice to these dudes for holding on to her? "Just keep on keeping your eyes on me," she sings in "Sparks Fly." And yet we can already tell this guy's going to be long forgotten by the next song.

Speak Now peaks with "Long Live," a ridiculously over-the-top prom anthem with all the epic girl-group swoon of the Ronettes or the Shirelles, plus a guitar hook from Def Leppard's "Hysteria." Swift belts about how getting crowned king and queen is the most excellent event that could ever happen. It's the sort of prom song that could only come from an artist who chose to spend her high school years on a tour bus. Yet when Swift sings it, damn if you don't believe every word.

Key Tracks: "Enchanted," "Long Live," "Speak Now"

Cee Lo's Unstoppable Soul Circus

"Fk You" was just the start: Gnarls Barkley singer has oddball style for miles**

Cee Lo Green ★★★★★

The Lady Killer *Elektra*



How can you not love Cee Lo? He's a virtuoso rapper who has one of pop's most unique singing voices. He's a self-proclaimed lady-killer who's roughly as tall as a mini-refrigerator and as broad as a Hummer. He wears pink suits. He put a song called "Fuck You" in the Top 20. He is, in other words, an original: a showman with a penchant for scrambling a variety of sounds – rock, soul, hip-hop, spaghetti-Western soundtracks – into something deliciously strange.

That weirdness makes Cee Lo's first album since Gnarls Barkley blew up one of the most engrossing records of 2010. It's tempting to peg the sound as retro-soul. But as with Gnarls, the music won't stay put. "Fool for You" slides from silken ballad to gospel funk. On "Love Gun," gunshots punctuate strings and surf guitars – it's part Philly soul, part James Bond theme.

At times there's a slight chilliness to Cee Lo; his stormy ballads – like the slow-boiling ballad stunner "Old Fashioned" – can seem less like confessions than stylistic exercises. But, oh, what style. Listen to Cee Lo at his most beatific, on "Bright Lights Bigger City," a thumping neo-disco ode to a bacchanalian night out. "Cocktails and conversation/Music and making love/And it's all right, it's all right, it's all right," he sings. Is there any other pop star you'd rather hit the town with? What are you, crazy?

JODY ROSEN

Key Tracks: "Old Fashioned," "No One's Gonna Love You"



STILL CRAZY
Cee Lo's oddball charisma makes *The Lady Killer* one of 2010's most engrossing records.

Elvis Costello

★★★★½

National Ransom

Hear Music/Concord

Costello hammers Wall Street, with help from T Bone Burnett



Elvis Costello traffics in so many genres, it must be hard to focus on one. Here, he

doesn't. Instead, busy producer T Bone Burnett brings period detail to a set of country, folk, music-hall and rock songs whose unifying conceit is America's recent fiscal sins. The rockers echo vintage Costello, down to Steve Nieve's squealing Vox organ. The subject matter calls for more musical edge than they deliver. But parlor songs like "Jimmie Standing in the Rain" evoke an era when political anger was cloaked in gentler sounds. Often, whispers speak louder than screams.

WILL HERMES

Key Track: "Dr. Watson, I Presume"

Loretta Lynn & Friends ★★★★★

Coal Miner's Daughter: A Tribute to Loretta Lynn

Columbia Nashville

Lucinda Williams, Kid Rock, others honor country queen



A tribute to the toughest Nashville queen ever, this record has a steely spine.

There are feisty anthems (Carrie Underwood belting "You're Lookin' at Country"), weepers (Lucinda Williams' take on "Somebody Somewhere") and "Coal Miner's Daughter," blasted out by Sheryl Crow, Miranda Lambert and Lynn herself. And who knew Paramore's Hayley Williams could honky-tonk? As for Kid Rock's "I Know How": He doesn't know how (to sing this song), but his heart's in the right place.

J.R.

Key Track: "You're Lookin' at Country"



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BRIAN BLADE

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REVIEWS MUSIC

Waka Flocka Flame ★★★★★^{1/2}

Flockaveli 1017 Brick Squad/
Asylum/Warner Bros.

Atlanta MC is more than
just a funny name



Atlanta's Waka Flocka Flame – the name comes partly from a Fozzie Bear catchphrase – has charisma enough for a dozen MCs. Which is good, since his skills are negligible. On his debut, Waka reduces hip-hop to a carnival-barker routine, blasting out exclamations ("Yay!" "Bang!") over bristling beats by producer Lex Luger. Waka barely bothers to write rhymes, but *Flockaveli* is hypnotic, focusing attention on the details beneath the bombast. In songs like "Bustin' at 'Em," you hang on every twist of Waka's raised voice while waiting – for a second or two at most – for the next "Bow!" to come crashing down.

JODY ROSEN

Key Tracks: "Bustin' at 'Em,"
"Hard in Da Paint"

Brian Eno

★★★★★^{1/2}

Small Craft on a
Milk Sea Opal/Warp

The godfather of ambient
rocks out – finally!



Since 1978's *Music for Airports*, Brian Eno has been releasing instrumental records that imagine electronic music as an opium den, leaving rock to his production clients (U2, Coldplay). *Small Craft* is something different: a rhythmically aggressive Brian Eno album. "Horse" features fearsome electric guitar, and the thrashing end of "2 Forms of Anger" reminds you that Eno helped invent glam, punk and No Wave. Awesome to hear him get rowdy again. Now, is a tour too much to hope for?

WILL HERMES

Key Tracks: "2 Forms of Anger," "Dust Shuffle"

BUY THESE NOW

Elton John and Leon Russell

The Union Decca

Elton reaches out to a dear old friend, and the pair trade piano licks and hard-won insights in front of a classy big band. It's the sound of two songmen lifting each other up.

Kings of Leon

Come Around
Sundown RCA

The Tennessee boys have their U2 moment: *Sundown* is down-homey and over-the-top, mixing backwoods kick with Edge-like guitars.

Lil Wayne

I Am Not a Human
Being Cash Money/
Young Money

What'd you expect, At Folsom Prison? Released while he's still in jail, Wayne's eighth album is a party from the start, full of varied, vibrant beats and killer punch lines.

The Ghost of a Saber Tooth Tiger ★★★★★^{1/2}

Acoustic Sessions

Chimera

Sean Lennon and
girlfriend strip down



It's one thing to hear others echo John Lennon, but quite another to hear his son Sean do it. Recorded in the couple's home studio, this set of duets by Lennon and his model girlfriend, Charlotte Kemp Muhl, recalls other forebears too, such as the damaged beauty of Elliott Smith. But the songs have a sunny, psychedelic side. "We'll make kites from our bones," the couple sing on "The World Was Made for Men," culling playfulness from deep darkness.

W.H.

Key Tracks: "Robot Boy," "The World Was Made for Men"

The Greenhornes

★★★★

[Four Stars] *Third Man*

Jack White's buddies lead
a psych-rock history class



The optimistically titled fourth disc from these Midwestern garage revivalists is not unlike the racket bassist Jack Lawrence and drummer Patrick Keeler kick up alongside Jack White and Brendan Benson in the Raconteurs. But whereas White relives rock history in fever dreams, Greenhornes singer-guitarist Craig Fox envisions the past through heavy eyelids. His rollicking punk tunes are coolly detached, and his psychedelic mudslides often laze in drooged-out repose: "Cave Drawings," a first-acid-trip vision of "floating sunbeams of satin," evokes a chill-out room from 1966. JON DOLAN

Key Tracks: "Cave Drawings,"
"My Sparrow"

Jefferson Airplane

★★★★★^{1/2}

Live at the Fillmore
Auditorium 10/15/66

Collectors' Choice

A sizzling show from their
pre-Grace Slick days



Grace Slick was the female face of psych rock. But she wasn't Jefferson Airplane's original frontwoman. This live album (one of four newly released shows) is the first official disc to feature Signe Anderson, whose style is more folk-blues mama than icy acid queen. Anderson belts out songs like "Chauffeur Blues," and elsewhere the Airplane reach cruising altitude on a nine-minute improvisation driven by throbbing bass lines.

MARK KEMP

Key Tracks: "Come Up the Years," "Chauffeur Blues"

TOP SINGLES

Band of Horses

★★★★½
"Georgia"

bandofhorses.com

Months after Cee Lo covered their slow-burn gem "No One's Gonna Love You," Band of Horses step out of their bearded comfort zone with a charged-up version of the Lady Killer's homage to his home state. It's an indie-rock pep rally - backed by the University of Georgia marching band, no less.

ERIC MAGNUSON

Ke\$ha ★★½
"We R Who We R"

keshaparty.com

This Dr. Luke-produced anthem - about "sick and sexified" kids who wave their freak flags while hitting the clubs - was inspired by a rash of suicides among gay youth. Lady K and human rights are an awkward fit. But she gets credit for doing empowerment her way, even if the song (from an upcoming EP) suggests "I Will Survive" by way of *Girls Gone Wild*. **JON DOLAN**

LISTEN NOW!
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Rihanna and Drake deliver what sounds like a smash with "Name."

Rihanna and Drake's Steamy Hookup

Rihanna feat. Drake ★★★★★

"What's My Name" *Leaked*

With the second single from the forthcoming *Loud*, Rihanna has created a perfect little tropical storm: Over dark, humid synths and swirling snare skitters, she's in full-on Caribbean-queen mode, dialing up her islander accent and rolling out a to-do list for any adult male seeking entrance into her chambers: "Hey, boy, I really wanna see if you can go downtown with a girl like me," she sings, kicking off the chorus. Her former fling Drake further steams

things up with a little, um, math: "The square root of 69 is 8-something," he offers, sounding like the nerdy guy in a fraternity. The end result isn't quite "Umbrella," but between its star power, sex appeal and the impeccably sculpted chorus, "What's My Name" seems like it's destined for ubiquity. Even Chris Brown has tweeted in support of the song's dopeness. For all his faults, Brown at least knows who's on top these days. **J.D.**

Robyn ★★★★★½
"Indestructible"

Leaked

The Swedish diva drops the first single from *Body Talk PT 3*, a disco remake of a ballad from *PT 2*. She sings an uncommonly elegant Europop melody, promising, "I'm gonna love you like I've never been hurt before."

CHRISTIAN HOARD

The Go! Team

★★★★½

"T.O.R.N.A.D.O."

thegoteam.co.uk

This U.K. band, known for head-snapping sound collages, returns with a mix of schoolyard chants, turntable scratches and horn blasts. It's deafening and funky - like a drill team strutting into a funnel cloud. **CARYN GANZ**

Michelle Mangione and Grace Slick

★★★

"The Edge of Madness"

grammymuseumstore.org

A benefit track for victims of the BP oil spill, "Madness" begs for justice on behalf of the Gulf Coast over spry zydeco. Too bad Slick, Jefferson Airplane's grande dame, is barely audible. **WILL HERMES**

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Avey Tare ★★★

Down There *Paw Tracks***Animal Collective guy makes burbling chill-out soundtrack**

If indie rock has become a noisier place lately – higher on gurgles and buzzes, fog banks of reverb and distortion-steeped yelps – Animal Collective deserve credit. Their gift, though, is for crafting noise into something pretty, warm and wet, and you can imagine much of co-frontman Avey Tare's solo debut playing at a very hip spa. "Laughing Hieroglyphic" pairs a pulsing accordion with gently chuckling drums, while "Lucky 1" sets a shimmering field of glinting chords against Tare's nasal but airy harmonizing. Those lyrics that aren't unintelligible are inscrutable: half-formed riddles about umbrellas and undertows. At best, the songs nudge around the furniture in your skull. At worst, they burble, drift and pleasantly fade away.

JONAH WEINER

Key Tracks: "Laughing Hieroglyphic," "Lucky 1"

Bryan Ferry ★★★½

★★★★½

Olympia *Astralwerks***Grand old man of glam gets the band back together**

At 65, former Roxy Music frontman Bryan Ferry is still the smoothest art-rock ever. Here he reconvenes the original Roxy (minus drummer Paul Thompson) for their first recording together since Brian Eno departed in 1973, along with all-stars like Nile Rodgers and David Gilmour. But Ferry could do a record with the *Star Wars* cantina band and it would come out pretty much the same: a bunch of lush, languorous Euro-glam ballads about love's labour's lost, all of them slathered in a sexy-vampire croon that makes lines about being "faithfully entwined in a shameless world" seem like some deep shit.

JON DOLAN

Key Tracks: "No Face, No Name, No Number," "You Can Dance"

The King of All Elvis Box Sets

This 30-disc collection covers Presley's entire career, for a royal \$750

Elvis Presley ★★★★★

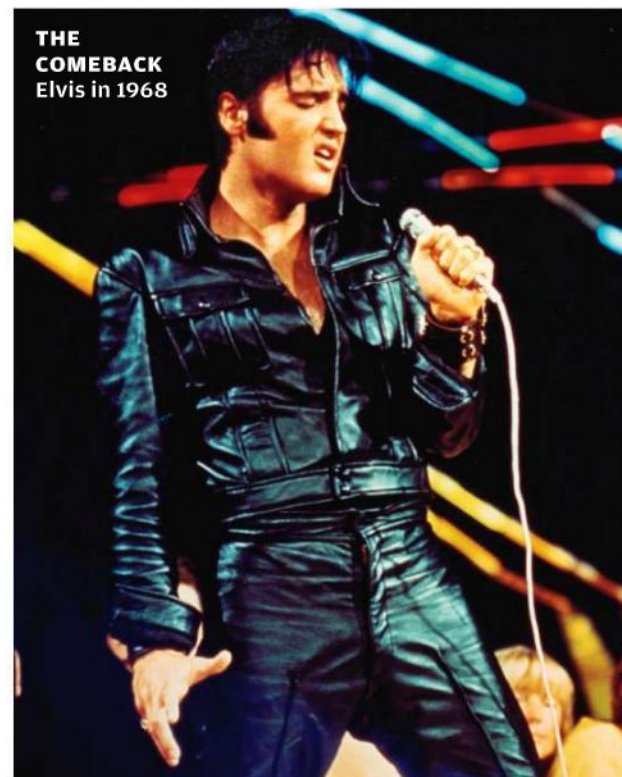
The Complete Elvis Presley Masters *RCA/Legacy*

If ever a catalog required smart curating, Elvis Presley's does. There are good examples of that: *The Complete 50's Masters*, *The Essential 60's Masters* and *The Essential 70's Masters* each tell stories about different aspects of the King's talent. But this mammoth 30-CD collection, consisting of every track Presley recorded during his lifetime, simply reinforces the often-told narrative of his life: an explosive debut in the mid-Fifties followed by intermittent sparks of renewal until his death in 1977. Obviously,



Complete Masters (available only at CompleteElvis.com for \$750) is for completists and fat cats only. Which is too bad, since the 103 rarities, outtakes, alternate versions, jams, demos and home recordings – all previously available – portray Presley as he should be remembered: rollicking, intent, joyful. The live material on Disc 29 – including a 1955 tear through Chuck Berry's "Maybellene" and a soaring version of "Unchained Melody" in 1977 – proves that Presley was capable of greatness at every phase of his life. But the later tracks in particular could use some cherry-picking: You shouldn't have to hear his deeply moving gospel recordings and hits like 1969's "Suspicious Minds" in the context of his long, dispiriting downward spiral.

ANTHONY DECURTIS



THE COMEBACK
Elvis in 1968

Kid Cudi ★★½

Man on the Moon II:

The Legend of Mr. Rager

*G.O.O.D./Universal***Melancholy Kanye protégé keeps wallowing**

As Drake and Kanye West have demonstrated, there's room in hip-hop for melancholic MCs who upend the self-congratulation that dominates the genre. The problem with Kid Cudi is that, since his hypnotic breakout single, "Day 'N' Nite," he's grown rote in his self-pity and flat as a singer: "These worries are heavy, they rest on my shoulders," he repeats in his hypomelodic baritone on "These Worries." "The darkness, yeah, I'd like to marry it," goes a line from "Maniac." His second album features dramatic, breathtakingly stark production by Emile and Plain Pat ("Wild'n Cuz I'm Young," riddled with sonar-style beeps, kills), but where Cudi fancies himself a deep downer, too often he's kind of a bore.

J.W.

Key Tracks: "Mr. Rager," "Wild'n Cuz I'm Young," "Mojo So Dope"

Lauren Pritchard ★★★

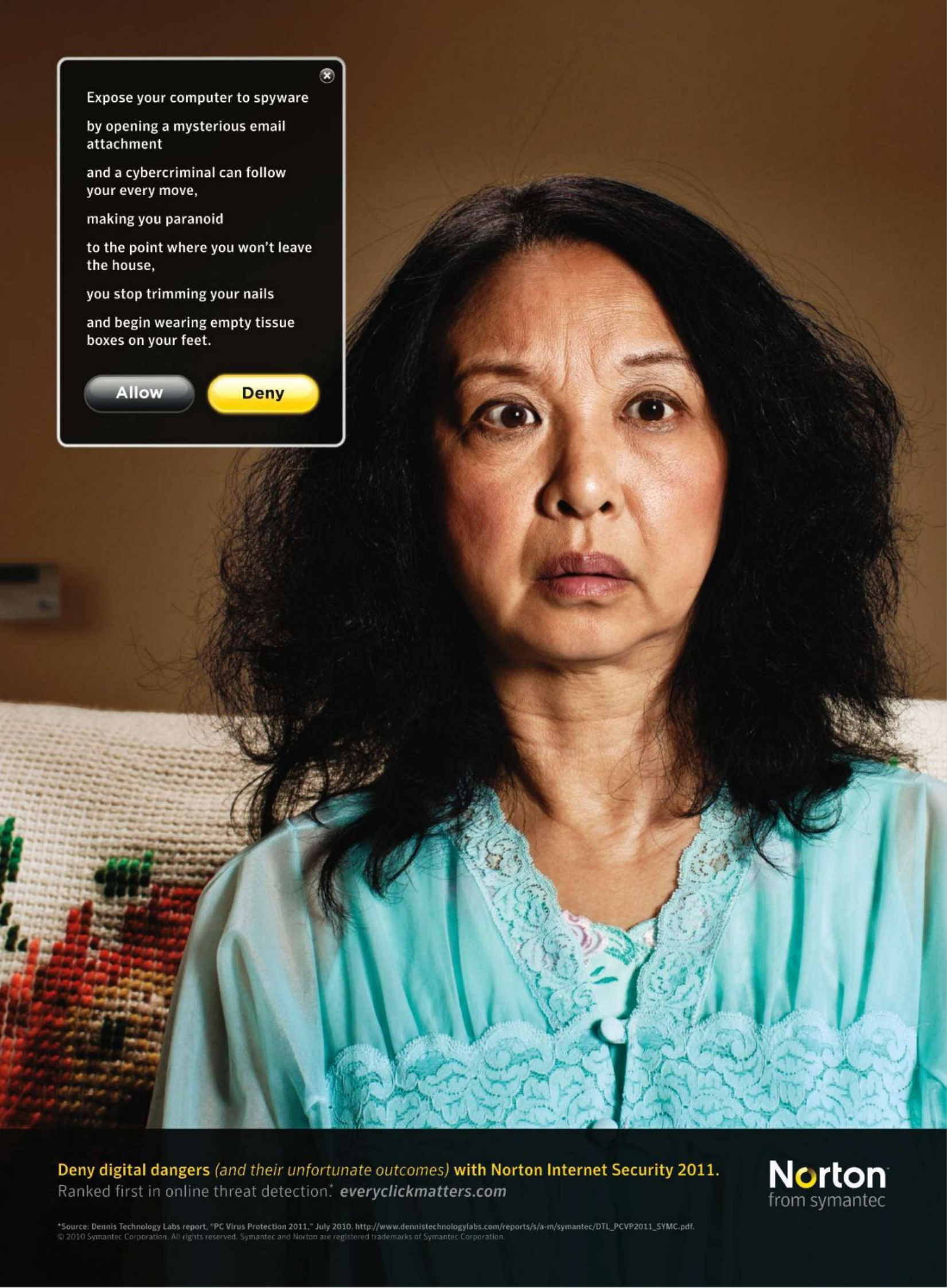
Wasted in Jackson

*Universal Republic***Southern soul singer finds her voice in London**

On the fiery title track to her debut, 22-year-old Lauren Pritchard forsakes a drab life in her Tennessee hometown. It's a perfect calling card for a restless striver who performed in *Spring Awakening* before landing in London to record *Wasted in Jackson*. The album is all neo-Dusty drama: big voice, big strings, big heartache. It's formulaic, but it mixes Southern orneriness with Brit-style quirks; "Bad Time to Fall" is a happy funk tune about hating happy tunes, and on the Marcus Mumford-produced art-folk number "When the Night Kills the Day," Pritchard moans with the dark, outsize passion of Kate Bush.

J.D.

Key Tracks: "Bad Time to Fall," "Painkillers," "Not the Drinking"



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REVIEWS MUSIC

Weezer

★★★★½ **REISSUE**

Pinkerton - Deluxe Edition DGC/UMe

A cult classic from 1996 gets expanded treatment



Weezer's tortured second album was the big Christmas flop of 1996: The last thing the radio wanted was Rivers Cuomo getting poetic over his yearning to bone Asian cellists, and the catchiest tunes ("Pink Triangle," "The Good Life") got buried in the second half, after most listeners had already lost patience. But *Pinkerton* became a cult classic, all raw guitars and self-loathing wit - it's the *In Utero* of sexual frustration. This package adds ace B sides ("Waiting on You"), outtakes ("Tragic Girl") and live versions, including an acoustic "Pink Triangle" where you can practically hear the audience squirm.

ROB SHEFFIELD

Key Tracks: "El Scorcho," "I Swear It's True," "Tragic Girl"

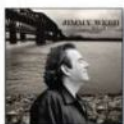
Jimmy Webb

★★★★½

Just Across the River

eOne Music

Songwriter duets with friends, revisits back pages

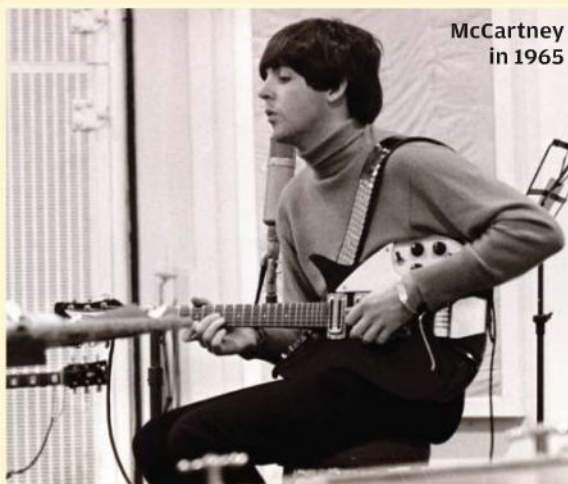


Few singers blend grit and grandeur like Jimmy Webb. On this collection, Webb reinterprets his classics with help from friends like Billy Joel ("Wichita Lineman") and Lucinda Williams, who brings a mournful edge to "Galveston." Webb sings two tracks - "It Won't Bring Her Back" and "Do What You Gotta Do," a calm take on romantic disaster - by himself in a sturdy yet flexible croon: The voice is like an old Mustang heading through a treacherous yet often gorgeous landscape.

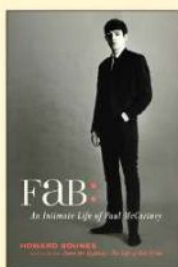
JAMES HUNTER

Key Tracks: "Galveston," "Do What You Gotta Do"

BOOKS



McCartney in 1965

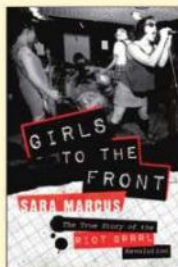


Fab: An Intimate Life of Paul McCartney

★★★★ Howard Sounes *Da Capo*

Few Beatle biographies are as exhaustive as this 634-page epic: Sounes (who wrote a similarly extensive Bob Dylan bio, *Down the Highway*) paints an unsparing portrait of McCartney as a sometimes overconfident artist with a nasty competitive streak. ("When did you write your last Number One?" McCartney snipes at a producer who challenges him.) Despite the book's heft, new revelations are few - unless you count the fact that Paul's uncle Will spent three years in jail for stealing from the ship he worked on, a troubling episode for the staid McCartney clan. (Another gripe: The chapters on Paul's marriage to Heather Mills read like an English tabloid.) For fans willing to ponder their hero's flaws, *Fab* delivers all you need to know - and a lot more.

BARRY WALTERS



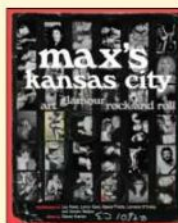
Girls to the Front: The True Story of the Riot Grrrl Revolution

★★★★½ Sara Marcus

Harper Perennial

Part punk revival, part feminist awakening, the Nineties riot-grrrl scene produced great slogans ("Revolution girl-style now!") and some of the era's fiercest indie rock. In her impassioned study, Marcus focuses on the girls in the crowd as much as stars like Bikini Kill, placing the story in the context of liberalism's post-Reagan crisis and mapping a civilization of Xeroxed jeremiads. Her chronicle ends in 1994, so there's nothing about the best band this music produced, Sleater-Kinney. But as an image of an American underground pre-Internet, it's a fascinating social history.

JON DOLAN



Max's Kansas City: Art, Glamour, Rock and Roll

★★★★ Edited by Steve Kasher *Abrams*

Before CBGB, there was Max's Kansas City, a two-story club north of Greenwich Village that drew in both punks and the Warholian art scene. This coffee-table book is long on unexceptional shots of Max's denizens, but it also mixes in captivating snaps (Sid Vicious glaring from the stage flanked by the Clash's Mick Jones) and first-hand accounts: There's a review of a 1973 show where - true fact! - Bob Marley and the Wailers opened for Bruce Springsteen.

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RadioShack



Mozzies

BY PETER TRAVERS

X-TREME CLIMBER
James Franco finds the role of his career in this true-life adventure.

Rockin' a Hard Place

Getting trapped with James Franco in a Utah canyon is – imagine that – pure exhilaration

127 Hours

★★★★½

James Franco

Directed by Danny Boyle

LEAVE IT TO DANNY BOYLE to expand the possibilities of movies by shrinking his focus. *127 Hours* is the claustrophobic true story of one guy, Aron Ralston, who is pinned down by a boulder in an isolated Utah canyon until he manages, horrifically, to free himself after six days. If your initial reaction to taking this endurance test is “Help! Get me outta here!” – fight it. Boyle, the visionary behind *Trainspotting*, *28 Days Later* and his Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire*, pumps every frame of *127 Hours* with cinematic adrenaline that declares war on the dull gravity of docudrama.

Of course, the whole movie would collapse if that one guy wasn't played by one hell of an actor. And James Franco does

the best, most natural and nuanced acting of his career to date, lacing terror with bracing humor. There's an incendiary daring to Franco's performance, a willingness to go for broke. *127 Hours* is 90 minutes of raw power and a double tour de force for Franco and Boyle.

Things start on the move as Aron bikes into Blue John Canyon, near Moab, Utah, in April 2003. With the gifted help of editor Jon Harris and co-directors of photography Anthony Dod Mantle and Enrique Chediak, Boyle pulls out all the split-screen stops as Aron whooshes through the wilderness to the propulsive sound of Free Blood's “Never Hear Surf Music Again.” When he flips his mountain bike, Aron laughs at himself and takes a photo.

The first chance Franco has to show us who Aron is comes when he encounters two hottie hikers (the beguiling Kate Mara and Amber Tamblyn) and takes them to an under-

ground lake. They talk about a party involving Scooby-Doo, but the girls know this devilish charm boy is a loner, and Franco excels at letting a few looks and gestures speak volumes.

Shortly after the girls wave goodbye, the accident happens. Scaling down a canyon, Aron slips. A boulder becomes dislodged, crushing his right forearm and trapping it against the canyon wall. He pulls and yanks at it. No give. Suddenly, the adventurer (27 at the time) who can't stop moving is locked in place. No one knows where he is – Aron's a lone wolf, remember. He makes a quick inventory – water, sandwich, camcorder, but no cellphone. Over 127 hours, anger turns to hope of rescue, fear it will never come, and worse.

It's here in this seemingly static situation that Boyle, who adapted Aron's memoir with Simon Beaufoy, makes his own special magic. Aron uses his camcorder as a way of

working out personal issues. A radio show Aron devises for himself is a comic highlight for Franco and the film. Dehydration (drinking his own urine doesn't help) leads to hallucinations, most involving his parents (Treat Williams and Kate Burton), his sister (Lizzy Caplan) and the girl (Clémence Poésy) who got away.

Still, it's on Franco's expressive face that Boyle tells his tale of courage under fire, even in that squirmy, avert-your-eyes moment when Aron uses a dull knife on his arm rather than resign himself to a tragic fate. Like the A.R. Rahman score that drives the movie, the triumphant *127 Hours* pays fitting tribute to Aron by being thrillingly alive.



THE TRAVERS TAKE

Get news, reviews and a chance to take your own shot at Hollywood at rollingstone.com/travers.

Due Date ★★½

Robert Downey Jr. and Zach Galifianakis

Directed by Todd Phillips

RECIPE FOR NUTSO FUN: Mix Zach Galifianakis with Robert Downey Jr. Apply the same mold John Hughes used for *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*. Have Todd Phillips stir with wack-ass abandon. Don't worry about missing ingredients, like plot. Serve to an audience ready to lap it up.

There you have *Due Date*, a raucous ride built out of used parts and bizarre shifts in tone but driven by two comic virtuosos who know that the best laugh riffs rise from a baseline of character. Director and co-writer Phillips (*Road Trip*, *Old School*) realizes his new movie has an 800-pound monkey on its back. That would be *The Hangover*, the 2009 farce that came out of nowhere to sprinkle Galifianakis with stardust and rule the world. Is *Due Date* the new *Hangover*? It is not. But it has its own rewards.

They all have to do with the interaction of the lead actors. Downey plays Peter Highman, a stressed-out suit in a hurry to leave Atlanta and get home to Los Angeles, where his wife (Michelle Monaghan) is about to give birth. Is he the father, or is it his BFF (Jamie Foxx)? Don't care. You won't either. What matters is that Peter meets Ethan Tremblay (Galifianakis), a wanna-be actor and full-fledged pain in the ass who gets them kicked off a jet and sharing a car to L.A. When they aren't out to kill each other, they grudgingly reveal their secret hearts. Sugar shock? Sometimes. But when Peter pushes Ethan into improv to prove he can act, or the two just let their emotions bleed, Galifianakis and Downey gift *Due Date* with something rare in any kind of movie: a soul.

Welcome to the Rileys ★★

Kristen Stewart, James Gandolfini, Melissa Leo

Directed by Jake Scott

WOULD YOU BELIEVE KRISTEN Stewart as an underage New Orleans stripper who hooks on the side? Or James Gandolfini as a married Indi-

**UP AGAINST IT**

Clockwise from top: Zach Galifianakis and Robert Downey Jr. spar for fun in *Due Date*; Naomi Watts and Sean Penn face off in *Fair Game*; Noomi Rapace is dressed to kill in the Swedish smash *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest*.

ana plumbing salesman who'd rather adopt her than screw her? Then *Welcome to the Rileys* may reach you in ways it never reached me. Stewart, out of her *Twilight* zone, is less mannered than usual. And Gandolfini commits fully to the gentle side of a man who sees his dead daughter reborn in KStew's lap dancer. Melissa Leo also scores as his agoraphobic wife. But the actors and admirably sensitive director Jake Scott (son of Ridley) can't compensate for Ken Hixon's long slog of a script.

Fair Game ★★½

Sean Penn, Naomi Watts

Directed by Doug Liman

BURIED UNDER THE DOCUDrama surface of *Fair Game* is a vividly intense look at a political marriage under siege. Naomi Watts stars as Valerie Plame, the CIA operative whose covert status was leaked to the media in 2003 by the Bush White House. Why? Plame's husband, retired am-

bassador Joe Wilson (Sean Penn), had returned from Niger to report that he found no evidence of WMDs being built by Saddam Hussein from Niger yellowcake uranium. Finding his words twisted, Wilson was eager to retaliate against the Bushwhackers and the leak, traced to Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff, Scooter Libby (David Andrews). Plame, with stealth in her DNA, was more reluctant. But the battle lines had been drawn, at home and in the corridors of power.

Director Doug Liman (*The Bourne Identity*, *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*), working from books by Plame and Wilson and a script by brothers Jez and John-Henry Butterworth, spends too much time covering ground well known from the headlines. But the scenes of the couple at home with their children and friends are uniquely fascinating, if not, in Wilson's words, "very 007-ish." Watts (quietly seething) and Penn (he makes the bluntly outspoken Wilson hell at the dinner table) bring ferocity and feeling to their roles, turning a potent political thriller into a stirring, relatable human drama.

The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest

★★★★

Noomi Rapace

Directed by Daniel Alfredson

WITH ALL THE BUZZ AROUND David Fincher's upcoming American take on Stieg Larsson's Swedish phenom, *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, you might forget the Swedes themselves have filmed all three parts of the late Larsson's bestselling trilogy, including *Dragon Tattoo*, *The Girl Who Played With Fire* and *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest*. They're damn fine films. Get over your fear of subtitles and you're in for a treat. All the films star the incandescent Noomi Rapace as Lisbeth Salander, the pierced, tattooed hacker in leather who helps journalist Mikael Blomkvist (a stellar Michael Nyqvist) uncover a conspiracy that eats at the Swedish soul. *Hornet's Nest* is talky but indisputably terrific, and it ends in a dazzling display of courtroom fireworks. Rapace is hot stuff in any language. Oscar, take heed. **B**

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[Cont. from 55] first episode of *Late Night* ended with him preparing to hang himself. "On *Saturday Night Live*, Conan and I got along right away because we had this work ethic in common, and we both have a melancholy side," says Smigel. "We would go out to dinner a lot, but we wouldn't enjoy ourselves."

Working 12- to 16-hour days, O'Brien eventually became more comfortable in front of the camera, and the audience got used to the odd rhythm of his performance style.

"I look at other people – Letterman's a perfect example – and I think, 'Oh, he's a precision instrument,'" O'Brien says. "And I mean that as a high compliment. But myself, I'm not a precision instrument. I go out there and I try stuff and I move and I do things, and when I hit a rich vein, I jump into it and really go for it. And I let people in on my vulnerability. People know when something isn't going well, or if there's an awkward moment, and when I get excited and happy I move around a lot. There's that famous Marshall McLuhan quote where he said, 'Television's a cool medium.' And I always thought, 'If television's a cool medium, I'm fucked.'"

"But," O'Brien continues, "as badly as things went in the beginning – and this sounds weird – but I always wanted to be there more than anybody didn't want me to be there. You know what I mean? I'm very aware when I'm not right for something. So let's say I had somehow been made the quarterback for the New England Patriots, replacing Tom Brady. I would ask to be taken out of the game after my first hit. But no matter how hard I got hit on late-night television, I never wanted to be taken out."

AFTER TAKING OVER AS HOST of *The Tonight Show*, O'Brien began having troubles right from the start, as he simultaneously attempted to make a play for Leno's older-skewing, more conventional audience while staying true to his fans with weirder bits like the subtitled, all-Spanish Telemundo satire "Conando." He ended up not entirely pleasing either demographic, and the show began regularly losing to Letterman in the ratings for the first time in more than a decade. "I think I started out being very cautious about taking good care of this amazing franchise," O'Brien acknowledges. "I would think, 'Is this a good *Tonight Show* bit?'"

In the end, with the ratings for Leno's prime-time show cratering and local affiliates demanding stronger lead-ins for their lucrative evening-news programs, O'Brien's fate was sealed. "As a producer, you're talking to all of the finance and sales guys, and everything on our end meeting all projections," insists Jeff Ross,

O'Brien's longtime producer. "That was not the problem. The Leno disaster was the problem. And then it became, 'Who's cheaper to get rid of?'"

O'Brien prefers not to say much about the end of his *Tonight Show*, referring only obliquely to "the events of the last nine months." He certainly emerged as the classiest actor in the affair, personally writing a heartfelt final message to his audience (in which he even thanked NBC) and paying additional severance to his staff out of his own pocket. (With the exception of bandleader Max Weinberg, O'Brien managed to retain his entire staff to work on *Conan*.) But an interview he gave to *60 Minutes* in May came off as self-pitying to some. "Time and again he talked about his departure in the agonized terms of someone suffering a fatal illness," noted *The Hollywood Reporter*. "Displaying zero of the antic charm that makes him such a great comic in late night... [O'Brien is] becoming the very person he usually mocks, just another egocentric Hollywood type." In a headline, Gawker advised, IT'S TIME FOR CONAN TO MOVE ON.

"I really feel like, 'I have got nothing to lose.' Let's face it: I'm not going to do another television show after this one."

"Knowing what I know, I'm quite confident that what happened really didn't have much at all to do with what I was doing," O'Brien says carefully. "That's not to say that my show was perfect. There were things that we did that I really liked and there were things that we did that I thought, 'Ehhh.' But given the situation, I don't think, even if I had done a radically different show, anything would have been different. I honestly believe that. And I'm fairly hard on myself."

"In some ways, I planned and worked for five years toward this one thing that was supposedly the epitome of my television dreams," O'Brien continues. "And then the still-kind-of-unthinkable happened. But one of the advantages of that experience is to really feel like, 'OK, I'm going to go for broke. I have got nothing to lose.' Let's face it: I'm not going to do another television show after this one."

WHEN O'BRIEN MOVED HIS family to Los Angeles for *The Tonight Show*, they bought a five-bedroom colonial home in Brentwood. It's white and columned and unflashily decorated, like a tasteful subur-

ban New England residence airlifted into one of the most exclusive neighborhoods in Southern California. One afternoon, in his bright, airy kitchen, O'Brien pours me a Sierra Nevada into a pint glass and, less happily, pours himself a glass of water. To get into the spirit of California living, he's been on what he calls a "very L.A." diet that bans, among other things, sugar, caffeine and alcohol. His wife, who has just arrived, and who is petite and blond, asks if he'd like some hummus, a snack not forbidden by the diet. "No, I'm good," O'Brien says, turning to me and adding, "She's on the same diet. We're both ready to kill somebody."

We move into O'Brien's home office, a dark-paneled den decorated with photographs of his family, an original I'M WITH COCO poster, framed architectural renderings of the set of *The Tonight Show* and a punching bag covered by his writing staff with the phrases most commonly heard in sketch meetings (i.e., "No, Conan, the joke makes *fun* of racists – the audience will get it!"). There's also a rack of guitars, including an exact replica of the Epiphone Casino John Lennon played on *Let It Be*, down to the nicks and scratches and replacement knobs. "Backstage at the show, I thought it would be cool to show this one to Elvis Costello," O'Brien says. "But he just shook his head and said, 'That's sick,' and walked away."

On another wall, there's a framed note from Jack Paar, the second host of *The Tonight Show*, predicting O'Brien will "someday get the Paar-Carson talk-show slot." "It's like, 'Hmm, didn't he leave a name out?'" O'Brien says.

This is the only mild moment of criticism of Leno that O'Brien allows himself. When I ask if he felt gratified by the savaging Leno received at the hands of other comics, O'Brien says, "I think this was another instance where NBC chalked it all up to me. If you look at the tapes, I probably made three jokes about him. Which I think I was entitled to do. But I was very careful not to go to town."

We settle into leather chairs on either side of a stone-topped coffee table. There are books everywhere: Roberto Bolaño's *The Savage Detectives*, the collected poems of John Berryman, collections of Chekhov, Barry Hannah, George Saunders, Lorrie Moore. O'Brien's wife, who has an MFA in creative writing, is always trying to turn him on to fiction, but O'Brien mostly reads history – most recently, a biography of Mark Twain and a book paralleling the capture of Jefferson Davis with Abraham Lincoln's funeral. O'Brien calls Lincoln "my ultimate human being," insisting, "Most people that you read about in history, the more you study them, the less impressive they become. Lincoln is one of the only ones where the more you find out, the more impressive he is. He was also our funniest president by far."

O'Brien's seven-year-old daughter, Neve, enters the room with her hands on her hips and asks, "Where's Mommy?"

"Oh, Mommy?" O'Brien says. "She went to China, I believe."

"Daddy!" Neve shouts, mock-exasperated. Theatrically stomping her foot, she marches out of the room.

O'Brien turns to me and says, "She's like a sitcom kid. I scream at them at night, 'You'll have a good blow [sitcom jargon for a joke funny enough to end a scene] and then out!'"

The final episode of O'Brien's *Tonight Show* ended with a raucous, valedictory cover of "Freebird," featuring Beck, Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top, Ben Harper, Will Ferrell on cowbell (and handling the apt lyrics) and O'Brien on guitar. "It was sort of like an Irish wake," O'Brien says. Since part of his \$32 million settlement with NBC included a noncompete clause forbidding him from performing on television or radio before September, O'Brien began thinking about putting together a band and playing a few low-key club shows, "in an Andy Kaufman kind of way, wearing a silly cowboy outfit, where people would eventually figure out it was me." But one of O'Brien's agents at the touring arm of William Morris got wind of the idea. "They fed my name into a computer, like, 'Conan does a show,' and apparently whipped cream came out, or the computer blew up," O'Brien says. "My producer told me, 'There's a really strong interest in this.'"

The shows featured different guests at each stop, everyone from Vampire Weekend to Jim Carrey. O'Brien discussed his eight-step recovery process (which included Blame Everyone Else, Blame Yourself, and 36 Hours of Red Bull and *Halo*), covered Radiohead's "Creep" in the voice of the chimney sweep from *Mary Poppins*, wore the purple leather suit from Eddie Murphy's *Raw* and inflated a giant bat purportedly from Meat Loaf's *Bat Out of Hell* tour. (Though, actually, O'Brien admits, it was a knockoff: "We asked Meat Loaf if we could use his bat, and he suddenly got all squirrely and said, 'I don't know.' Then he said, 'I'm busy. I'm using it.' And then we checked out his tour schedule, and he wasn't! Like, what are you using it as - a bouncy castle at a kid's party?")

O'Brien found the shows exhilarating and therapeutic. "The best experience I've had in show business in my entire life was that tour," he says. "My whole career has been an attempt to get close to that red-hot core of real show business. That's what I loved about *Saturday Night Live*, and then the *Late Night* show: I'm backstage, people are running around, there's cameramen, people in horse costumes. But this tour was the final extension of that, where I'm putting on my own make-up in some dingy dressing room, with the old lights around me, and the band's play-

ing the warm-up. You know, I went back in time. I was in vaudeville."

As the debut of *Conan* nears, the mantra of Team O'Brien remains clear: Continue to harness that vibrant, ineffable quality that made the final weeks of *The Tonight Show* and the subsequent live tour so thrilling to watch. The problem, of course, is that part of what made those performances so special was their rarity. It's not every day that you get to see a major star spend a week mocking his employer after he's been shafted, or see that same star perform a relatively intimate show in your hometown with all sorts of surprise guests. The tour dates were unique, unreproducible moments, desirable precisely because you couldn't conjure them on-demand on the screen in your pocket.

Add to that the problem of standing out in the increasingly clotted modern-media landscape. When O'Brien debuted on *Late Night* in 1993, he faced no talk-show competition whatsoever for two years in his time slot. (And after that, the competition was Tom Snyder.) Today, at any given moment, you can watch new con-

"The crazy thing about this business, the thing that keeps you going, is you're always greedy for one more moment."

tent from Letterman, Leno, Kimmel, Craig Ferguson, Jimmy Fallon, Bill Maher, Jon Stewart, Stephen Colbert, Chelsea Handler, George Lopez, *Saturday Night Live*, *Between Two Ferns With Zach Galifianakis* and, via YouTube, pretty much any clip filmed by any comic ever in history. "All of the ratings are a disaster now," admits Ross. "Leno's doing worse than we were doing a year ago. Letterman's doing terribly. A lot of it has to do with the fact that there's too much out there."


O'Brien worries about all of these factors, in part because he is a congenital worrier. "I remember, he would always say, years ago, 'Is everything going to work out with my career?'" Powel tells me. "And it would be like, 'What are you talking about? You've had the *Late Night* show for 10 years already!'" To capture the energy of the live shows, he's considering blending more music into *Conan*, as well as incorporating more interactive, online elements, though what exactly that means is vague. O'Brien says he's on his computer all the time, but that he's basically "looking up weird facts about Bess Truman," and acknowledges that when someone first suggested he begin Twittering, his response

was, "I'm the person who makes fun of celebrities on Twitter." (And, in fact, his daily tweets have felt somewhat lackluster, like concoctions of a street-team marketing department.) "With the new technology, what we're losing track of a little bit in entertainment is mystery," O'Brien says. "The big trick is to let the fans in, but also still surprise them. That's the tightrope act of the modern era. Everybody wants to shoot a behind-the-scenes. And then somebody else wants to shoot a behind-the-scenes of the behind-the-scenes. Every day, my Web people come to me and say, 'We want to show...' If they could, they would release my first show online 48 hours before it aired. They don't understand when you tell them, 'Yeah, but who would tune in to my show?' 'But it's so cool! It's going to go viral! We'll get so many hits!'"

As for specifics, O'Brien and his writers are mulling the idea of titling each night's show like an old crime series from the Seventies ("And tonight's episode... 'A Time to Kill'"), or having a big seven-month-anniversary special when they surpass the number of episodes they did for *The Tonight Show*. But O'Brien knows his greatest strength as a comic performer is reactive, improvisatory, and so can never entirely be preplanned. "The really great moments that have happened to me over the years in late-night television have always been a mistake," O'Brien says. "Something happening in the moment, where things go off the rails, but it's beautiful."

In a sense, it's suggested, the past nine months have been an epic version of just such a moment, with O'Brien, in free fall, forced to take his improv game to a whole new level.

"Yeah, exactly," O'Brien says. "The most classic moments in late-night television, like with Carson, when Ted Ames throws the tomahawk at him and almost hits him in the crotch? Those were mistakes. And you are right. I hadn't thought about it that way, but the last nine months has been one giant tomahawk in the crotch. But it has been fascinating."

"There are times when I've told myself, 'Maybe I could have gone on and done *The Tonight Show* for 15 years, but never had the impact that I had doing those last six shows' - so maybe that moment's a gift, you know?" O'Brien continues, sounding as if he's still trying to convince himself. "The crazy thing about this business, the thing that keeps you going, is you're always greedy. You can get into a funk, and beat up on yourself. Because you're always thinking, 'Maybe I can get one more moment like that out of my career.' And you'll walk across glass to get it." He means "broken glass," of course. But for a moment, it's hard not to picture O'Brien, like some silent-film clown, gingerly stepping onto an endless glass surface, smooth as ice, where the possibilities for a flawless pratfall are infinite. 

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GARRY TRUDEAU

[Cont. from 67] *"Stars and Stripes" was one of the first subscribers to "Doonesbury"?*

Yes.

Why?

I don't know their reasoning.

Weren't you the antithesis of what they were looking for?

I frankly haven't a clue, but I was thrilled when they bought the strip. Later on, in the mid-Seventies, there was a movement to get rid of it, but by then it had become entrenched and the soldiers liked it.

As I gathered from talking to Vietnam vets years later, it wasn't that I got it right. How could I? I was 21 years old, I was a hippie college student, and I created in the strip this kind of fantasia in which the Viet Cong, represented by Phred, and the U.S. soldiers, represented by B.D., came together in a counterculture sensibility: "Can't we all get along?" Obviously, that had nothing to do, whatsoever, with the reality of the American GI in Vietnam. I think the soldiers were drawn to it because it was evidence that somebody was thinking about them, that they were on somebody's radar screen, and it was appreciated. Many Vietnam vets have told me that. It baffles me, because it didn't really reflect their experience, but at the same time I'm delighted that it made an impact.

And now the Pentagon brass has embraced the work you're doing on injured soldiers.

When I made the decision during the Battle of Fallujah that B.D. was going to suffer this grievous wound, some old friends at the Pentagon called up and invited me to Walter Reed hospital. They wanted to make sure I got it right, and everyone was enormously helpful. It is odd for an old peacenik like me to have so many people with "colonel" and "brigadier general" in front of their names in my Rolodex.

I think of you, in some ways, as our generation's Bill Mauldin – the cartoonist who chronicled World War II from the soldier's point of view. The military has so much to do with the strip, and you're entirely sympathetic.

While at the same time not trying to obscure my views of the war and why they're there. I've tried to keep the politics pretty much out of the strips about the wounded warriors in any direct fashion. My only agenda is to encourage people to think about the responsibility that this country owes not just its fallen warriors but all of its veterans and soldiers. I've seen far too many Vietnam veterans still in treatment for the psychological wounds they received in Vietnam, and we owe them better. There's a real disconnect in this country between most of the population and its military culture.

More so than in the 1960s?

Yes, because in the Sixties, everybody theoretically had skin in the game – anybody, theoretically, could be drafted. Now we've emotionally outsourced the war. We've asked the warrior class to fight a war that many people have just put out of their minds. No leaders have asked us to make any sacrifice, other than budgetary.

As you've worked to keep the strip relevant, have you come to see the current generation as different in any fundamental ways than your generation was back in the Sixties?

Well, to begin with, there's no "generation gap." In the Sixties, few families were spared the turmoil brought on by profound changes in society. *All in the Family*, the number-one TV show when the strip launched, was premised on that generational divide. Boomers generally seemed to have learned from that experience, and the good news today is that families have never been closer. But that could also be the bad news. All the hovering may have taken a toll on self-reliance and resourcefulness.

In any event, I really like this cohort. Some of them don't think I do, because my younger characters can act like such idiots, but so can my older characters. No one should look to a comic strip for role models.

How has your relationship with readers changed in the age of Facebook?

Most of the mail I used to get has almost completely evaporated. When people

have something to say, it's all online now – it's on blogs, it's on chat groups. I think it's very dangerous for people who do anything that's public to venture on the Web and check out what people are saying about them. Yes, you're bound to find things that will delight you – but you also find things that will make you brood and feel bad about yourself. Why would you intentionally invite that into your life?

That's what school was for.

That's what high school was for.

Does the Obama administration make your job easier or harder?

Like a lot of my cartoonist peers, I find Obama difficult to get a handle on as a subject. He doesn't have salient features, either physically or in terms of his temperament or his policies. I know there are people who think he's a fascist or a socialist. I happen to think he's a raving centrist, so in that assessment of him, I find it difficult to find things to exaggerate as cartoonists do.

How do you produce the strip each week?

I do it with pencil and then fax it to my assistant, who puts it on a light table and traces over it. Then all of this other stuff is filled in by computer, all the zips and the blacks and the dialogue. The shame of it is that I no longer have originals I can do anything with. For the first 20 years I had original ink drawings, but my ritual at the end of every workweek was to take them and tear them up.

You destroyed the originals? I can't fathom that.

It finally stopped when Jonathan Alter did this piece and told me I was mad. After a while I realized, "OK, maybe I should be holding on to them."

Are you worried about the comic strip becoming an obsolete form as more and more newspapers disappear? If you were getting out of Yale today, would you be thinking of doing a comic strip?

As you note, it's not really comics that are becoming obsolete – it's newspapers generally. We're all going off the cliff together. Up until now, strip syndication was the closest thing to tenure that pop culture offered. If you got your foot in the door and developed a readership, you had a career. Today my client list is eroding, but since it's so large

When I brought this news home, there were great hurrahs throughout the house. As soon as the kids went to bed, or they'd go down for a nap or get up early, there was always a deadline hanging over me – it was a real quality-of-life issue. Having this gift of several weeks of downtime over the year changed my life for the better, and had the intend-

supports the work. Certainly, there's no absence of things to inspire me as I move through the world. There's no shortage of subjects for me to write about. The one innate quality that I have is curiosity, and that doesn't seem to have abated. I wake up in the morning and I can't wait to get to the paper downstairs. As long as that interest in what's going on in the world stays with me, I can't imagine giving up the strip. This is my small contribution to the national conversation.

So will "Doonesbury" live on after you're gone, like "Dick Tracy" or "Gasoline Alley"?

What my generation of creators introduced is the idea of an auteur as comic-strip writer – that it's a signature voice that would be very hard to replicate without changing the strip dramatically. Plus, I was able to wrangle my own copyright, so I have no legal obligation, as many artists do, to surrender the strip. I don't know if I'll do it until I drop. I don't know if I'm a lifer. But the strip will perish with me. **2**

"It is odd for an old peacenik like me to have so many people with 'brigadier general' in front of their names in my Rolodex."

to begin with, I can probably look forward to several more years of this. I'll be one of the old dudes they ask to turn out the lights.

Needless to say, I no longer advise anyone to get into the business. Even online comics are so far mostly a bust. The future is with graphic novels or animation or something no one has imagined yet. If I were graduating now, I'd be standing with my portfolio outside of Pixar.

Did you ever get tired of the strip and decide, "OK, this is enough, I'm done"?

Comics have always been treated as something of a public utility – we were required to produce this product 365. After Bill Watterson retired from doing *Calvin and Hobbes*, I got a call from my editor at the time, Lee Salem. He said, "There's something not quite right about how we take care of our creators as opposed to how we take care of all the other employees, that you don't have any kind of break." He said that he was going in front of the board and proposing that anyone who had been there for five years or longer would be entitled, at his or her option, to take vacation weeks and send out reruns.

ed effect of keeping me in the saddle longer. I don't feel nearly as stressed out as I did in the old days, because I know there are these vacations on the horizon.

How long do you plan to keep doing it?

I feel like I'm good to go for as long as my imagination

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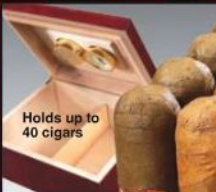
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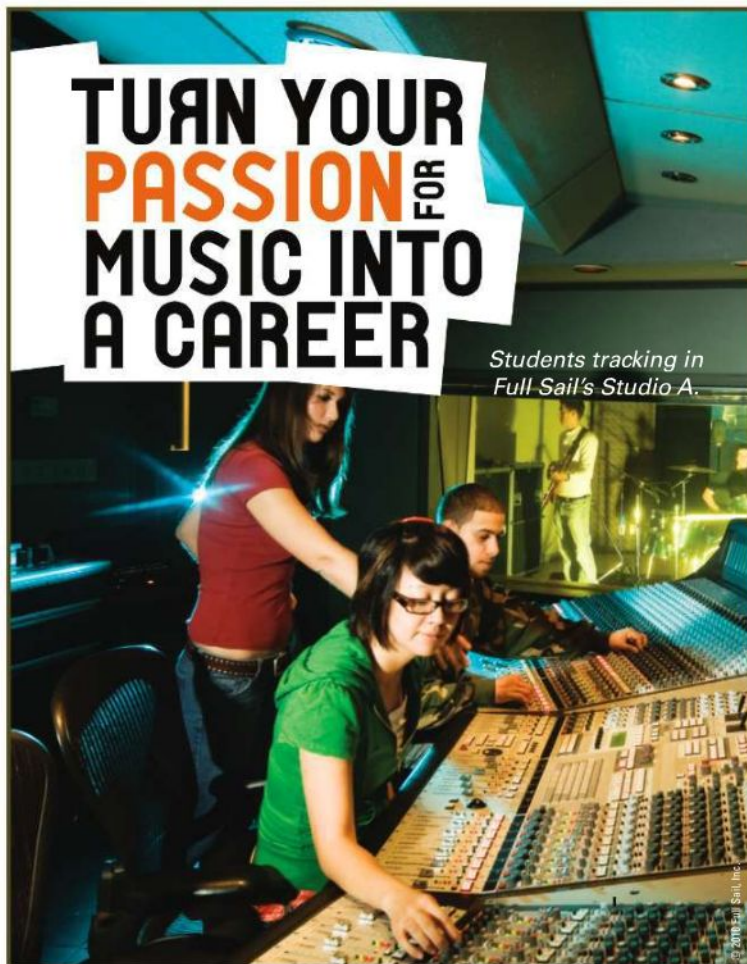


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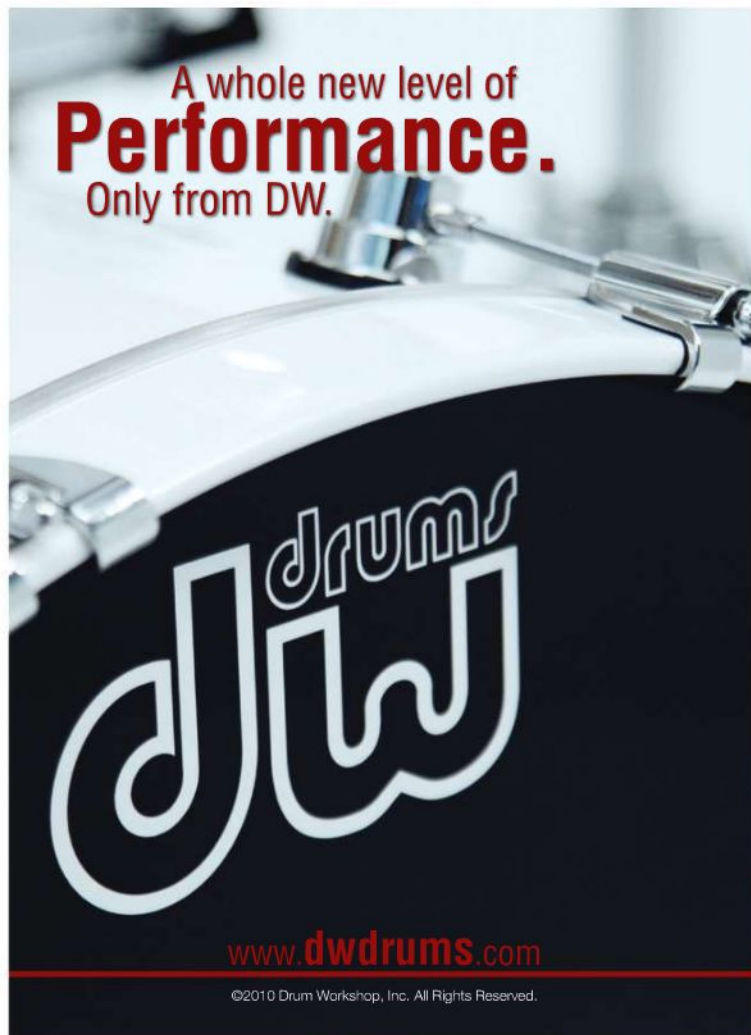
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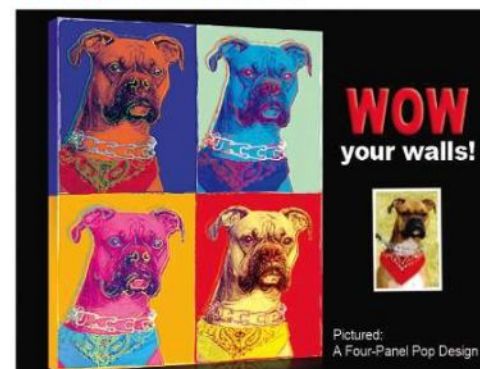
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CHARTS

iTUNES TOP 10 SONGS

- 1 Taylor Swift**
"Back to December" - Big Machine
- 2 Far East Movement**
"Like a G6" - Cherrytree/Interscope
- 3 Nelly**
"Just a Dream" - Universal Motown
- 4 Bruno Mars**
"Just the Way You Are" - Elektra
- 5 Rihanna**
"Only Girl (In the World)" - Def Jam
- 6 Pink**
"Raise Your Glass" - LaFace
- 7 Flo Rida**
"Club Can't Handle Me" - Atlantic
- 8 Usher**
"DJ Got Us Fallin' in Love" - LaFace/Jive
- 9 Taio Cruz**
"Dynamite" - Mercury
- 10 Trey Songz**
"Bottoms Up" - Songbook/Atlantic

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COLLEGE RADIO TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 Of Montreal**
False Priest - Polyvinyl
- 2 No Age**
Everything in Between - Sub Pop
- 3 Deerhunter**
Halcyon Digest - 4AD
- 4 Arcade Fire**
The Suburbs - Merge
- 5 Grinderman**
Grinderman 2 - Anti-
- 6 The Black Angels**
Phosphene Dream - Blue Horizon
- 7 The Walkmen**
Lisbon - Fat Possum
- 8 Junip**
Fields - Mute
- 9 Superchunk**
Majesty Shredding - Merge
- 10 Jenny and Johnny**
I'm Having Fun Now - Warner Bros.

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From the Vault

RS 720, November 2nd, 1995

TOP 10 SINGLES

- 1 Mariah Carey**
"Fantasy" - Columbia
- 2 Coolio**
"Gangsta's Paradise" - MCA Soundtracks
- 3 Janet Jackson**
"Runaway" - A&M
- 4 Seal**
"Kiss From a Rose" - ZTT/Sire
- 5 Groove Theory**
"Tell Me" - Epic
- 6 Sophie B. Hawkins**
"As I Lay Me Down" - Columbia
- 7 Hootie and the Blowfish**
"Only Wanna Be With You" - Atlantic
- 8 Michael Jackson**
"You Are Not Alone" - Epic
- 9 Take That**
"Back for Good" - Arista
- 10 Del Amitri**
"Roll to Me" - A&M



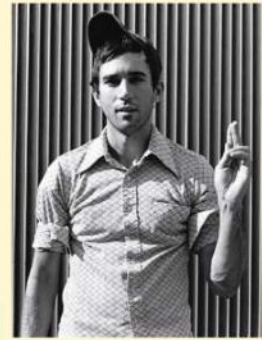
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"My parents know a lot of what I've gone through, and they're happy I got it all out of my system. My dad called me up when he heard the record and said, 'So you're expressing a lot of emotion. That's good.' And I laughed and said, 'Yeah, I am, to say the least.'"

—Alanis Morissette

Top 40 Albums

- 1 16 ↑ Lil Wayne**
I Am Not a Human Being - Cash Money/Young Money
- 2 NEW Darius Rucker**
Charleston, SC 1966 - Capitol Nashville
- 3 NEW Big Time Rush**
BTR (Soundtrack) - Nickelodeon/Columbia
- 4 NEW The Band Perry**
The Band Perry - Republic Nashville
- 5 4 Eminem**
Recovery - Aftermath/Interscope
- 6 2 Kenny Chesney**
Hemingway's Whiskey - BNA
- 7 NEW Sufjan Stevens**
Age of Adz - Asthmatic Kitty
- 8 5 Zac Brown Band**
You Get What You Give - Southern Ground/Roar/Bigger Picture/Atlantic
- 9 1 Toby Keith**
Bullets in the Gun - Show Dog-Universal
- 10 NEW All That Remains**
For We Are Many - Prosthetic
- 11 7 Linkin Park**
A Thousand Suns - Machine Shop
- 12 3 Bruno Mars**
Doo-Wops & Hooligans - Elektra
- 13 9 Trey Songz**
Passion, Pain & Pleasure - Songbook/Atlantic
- 14 10 Selena Gomez and the Scene**
A Year Without Rain - Hollywood
- 15 NEW Belle and Sebastian**
Write About Love - Matador
- 16 8 Katy Perry**
Teenage Dream - Capitol
- 17 12 Justin Bieber**
My World 2.0 - RBMG/Island
- 18 11 Maroon 5**
Hands All Over - A&M/Octone
- 19 20 Santana**
Guitar Heaven: The Greatest Guitar Classics of All Time - Arista
- 20 14 NOW 35**
Various Artists - Universal/EMI/Sony Music
- 21 6 Waka Flocka Flame**
Flockaveli - 1017 Brick Squad/Asylum
- 22 23 Mumford and Sons**
Sigh No More - Glassnote
- 23 NEW Lady Antebellum**
A Merry Little Christmas - Capitol Nashville
- 24 NEW Far East Movement**
Free Wired - Cherrytree/Interscope
- 25 NEW Trapt**
No Apologies - Eleven Seven
- 26 27 Wow Hits 2011**
Various Artists - Provident-Integrity/Word-Curb/EMI
- 27 21 John Legend and the Roots**
Wake Up! - Home School/G.O.O.D./Columbia
- 28 29 Lady Antebellum**
Need You Now - Capitol Nashville
- 29 26 Jamey Johnson**
The Guitar Song - Mercury Nashville
- 30 19 Eric Clapton**
Clapton - Reprise
- 31 NEW Joshua Radin**
Rock & the Tide - Mom + Pop
- 32 28 Billy Currington**
Enjoy Yourself - Mercury Nashville
- 33 18 Gucci Mane**
The Appeal: Georgia's Most Wanted - 1017 Brick Squad/Asylum
- 34 33 Drake**
Thank Me Later - Young Money/Cash Money/Universal Motown
- 35 30 Disturbed**
Asylum - Reprise
- 36 31 Fantasia**
Back to Me - S/19/J
- 37 36 Lady Gaga**
The Fame - Streamline/KonLive/Cherrytree/Interscope
- 38 NEW Marco Antonio Solis**
En Total Plenitud - Fonovisa
- 39 48 Miranda Lambert**
Revolution - Columbia (Nashville)
- 40 58 Florence and the Machine**
Lungs - Universal Republic



The State of Sufjan

After he was mostly MIA for the past five years, Stevens' comeback sold 36,000 copies its first week - fueled by Amazon, which sold it for \$3.99.



Metal Monsters

New England metalcore act All That Remains have a rock-radio hit with their single "Hold On." The band's new LP sold 29,000 copies its first week out.



Eastern Invasion

L.A. Asian-American electro-rap group Far East Movement have a monster hit with "Like a G6," which helped their first album debut at Number 24.



The Pop Machine

U.K.'s Florence and the Machine got a boost from appearances on *Ellen* and *Dancing With the Stars* - her debut has now sold a total of 188,827 copies.

00 Chart position on Oct. 20th, 2010
00 Chart position on Oct. 13th, 2010
NEW New Entry
2ND Re-Entry
↑ Greatest Gainer

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